

Bringing Vegan into Vogue

VEGAN *life*

Miracle liquid

Make the perfect vegan meringue with aquafaba

A taste of autumn

Drinks inspired by the season's flavours

Unity

Earthlings film maker talks about his new movie

People power

Can demos do more harm than good?



Mint Chocolate Chip Macarons p.25



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WELCOME



I'm delighted to be joining the Vegan Life team as editor – as a regular reader who spent years combing the shelves for a magazine like this one, it's very exciting to be part of a publication that's already become such a valuable and engaging resource for so many.

And in my opinion, there's never been a better time to be vegan – with so many options hitting mainstream supermarkets, as well as ever expanding online communities, and of course the magazine you hold in your hands, a once niche lifestyle is more accessible, and more desirable, than ever.

At this time of year, the nights have started drawing in, and summer is just a distant memory. But we're helping you make the most of the season with a selection of autumnal recipes and a guide to the best drinks to wash them down with. As ever, we also bring you our list of our current favourite accidentally vegan treats – you might be surprised by what's out there.

But of course veganism is more than just a diet – so we've sought out one of the scene's most exciting voices to give his perspective. Shaun Monson is the director of groundbreaking documentary Earthlings. I spoke to him about his new film Unity, which examines the idea of compassion for all expressions of life. For so many people, Earthlings was an eye-opener. Shaun discusses why Unity can have the same impact.

The past few months have been exciting for those with an interest in animal welfare. We have seen social media storms sparked by outrage over trophy hunting and fox hunting galvanise legislation makers and businesses into action. Are these new 'clicktivists' replacing traditional demonstrators? Is protest still a useful tool for change? That's the topic of our big debate.

On top of that, we've brought you all the best vegan news from across the globe and in depth features you can sink your teeth into.

We always love to hear from vegans with stories to tell. Are you a campaigner? An artist? Maybe you're always blogging about your recipe successes. If so drop us a line. Did you rate the issue? Have any ideas you'd like to see us cover? Get in touch – via email, Facebook or Twitter. It's always great to hear your views.

Maria

Maria Chiorando
Editor



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THOUGHTS ALONG THE VEGAN WAY

**"When you feel the suffering of every living thing
in your own heart, that is consciousness."**

~ Bhagavad Gita

VEGANlife

MEET THE TEAM

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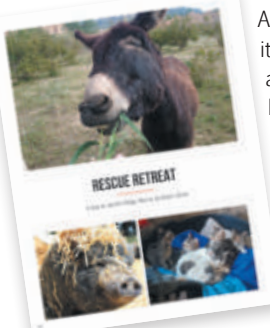
We want to hear from you! Get in touch with us via facebook, twitter, instagram, email, or good old-fashioned letter – we love hearing your thoughts on the magazine and all things vegan.



Hi,

I just want to say, I never fail to read my Vegan Life mag from cover to cover. I aim to absorb every bit of vegan-ness I can from the glorious pages you put together in your magazine! Being a vegan is so rewarding and at times so challenging. Mine and my partner's vegan journey is just starting and with the support of each other, the learning, the cooking and the knowledge of what we can and can't have, building it is becoming easier and easier. But surrounded by people who constantly question the vegan choice, constantly wanting a response to: "Why don't you eat meat or have any dairy products, dairy products don't kill animals" My simple response has now become: "Why do you eat meat and dairy products?" Your magazine supports me, if I need to read encouraging words, or if I am feeling lost, I go straight to my Vegan Life magazine where I know that I'm not alone. Absolutely fantastic and I promote you wherever I can. So thank you for being my inspiration.

Sarah Thompson



After two months of deliberating whether it was worth booking a package holiday as a vegan, or facing the stress of the DIY route and still spending half my holiday trying to find a decent place to eat... Vegan Life magazine (July/August) quite literally came to the rescue! After reading the article 'Rescue Retreat' I got straight in touch with the lovely owners at Pig Village and was lucky enough to find a spare

week available. I had the best holiday: A wonderful mix of worthwhile volunteering, meeting like-minded people, spending time with the animals and relaxing in the hammocks. Lynn's vegan cooking was second-to-none so what is usually a chore on holiday was turned into a real treat. Thank you for all the great things your magazine is introducing me to!

Sarah Barton



Mine arrived in the post today, going to sit down tomorrow and have a read. Excited!
Claire F Linden



Lazing on a sunny afternoon with @VeganLife_Mag. Love that there's an easily accessible vegan magazine.
@_Rachele_



Just found out about your magazine and picked up a copy!! So great and informative - exactly my kind of mag x
@wholegreengirl



Great to see @VeganLife_Mag on @WHSmith shelves, with other veg mags. Better eating 4 health, animals & planet #vegan
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Star Letter

Next issue's Star Letter will win a nail duo worth £15 from Beauty Without Cruelty *bwcshop.com*



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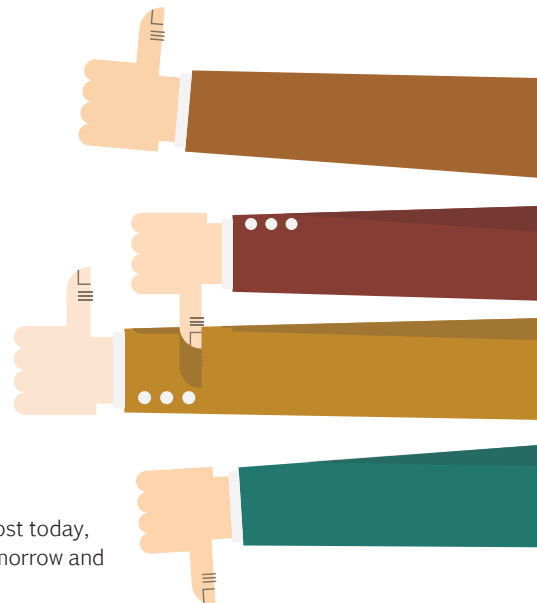
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VEGAN NEWS

Bite-sized updates on all things vegan from the worlds of entertainment, politics, sports, animal advocacy and more. Got news to share with us? Get in touch!



Drones used in war on seal slaughter

An animal rights group is using drones to battle seal-shooting marksmen. Sea Shepherd UK is a marine conservation charity whose mission is to protect ecosystems and species by ending the destruction of habitats and slaughter of wildlife. The charity claims shooters are killing seals to protect salmon stocks, so they are using the high-tech flying machines to take pictures and films. Operations boss Robert Read said: "Drones being used for conservation work is something that's been increasing over recent years. What has always been lacking is drones that can operate safely over water – most drones which came down in the sea would be fried by the salt water. This drone could not be used to physically stop a gunman, but it could be used to find them from high altitude and film situations as they happen."



Drive-thru with a difference

An organic company in America is flipping the idea of fast food on its head. Andy and Rachel Berliner – the duo behind the Amy's Kitchen grocery brand - have branched out, creating a drive-thru eaterie. The menu is full of Americana comfort food staples including burgers, chips, milkshakes and mac and cheese, but with a difference. There's no meat on the menu, the ingredients are organic and non-gmo, and there are gluten-free and vegan versions of everything. In addition, the staff are paid the living wage plus health benefits. So far, it has gone down a storm, with over 500 customers on opening day alone. Part of the success is down to the owners keeping the price points affordable, despite the quality produce. According to Andy: "Our relationships with farmers and our knowledge of how to make delicious food on a large scale has really made this project possible. We've been able to keep the quality high and the prices reasonable."

More evidence of vegan Banksy?

Enigmatic street artist Banksy's latest work has once again fuelled rumours he is vegan. His exhibition **Dismaland** 'A Bemusement Park' on Weston-super-Mare's seafront is a pastiche of a traditional theme park. One of the images released shows a sculpture of a killer whale jumping from a toilet through a hoop into a tiny paddling pool – possibly in reference to captive whales forced to live in cramped conditions and perform for audiences. Banksy has referenced animal abuse in earlier work, notably *Sirens of the Lambs* in 2013, where a truck stuffed with crying animatronic toy animals was driven around New York's Meatpacking district. The NYPD reportedly impounded the vehicle, which later made its UK appearance at Glastonbury in 2014, patrolling the festival at mealtimes.



Don't forget the real victims of the dairy industry

The Vegan Society has hit out at dairy farmers' headline-grabbing gimmicks. After farmers stormed supermarkets with a number of cows in tow, CEO Jasmijn de Boo said the stunt highlighted the industry's treatments of the animals as 'objects and props, lacking sentence or feeling'. Milk prices have fallen due to a global decrease

in demand, with some producers claiming they are losing money on every litre. This has led the Farmers Union of Wales'

milk committee to suggest a cow cull to halt overproduction. Jasmijn was disappointed with the proposals, saying: "This would be a callous quick-fix to an unsustainable industry that will continue to struggle as more and more people turn to plant milk. The Vegan Society is sympathetic to workers losing their livelihoods, but in this case governmental measures need to be put in place to diversify away from this failing industry."



End of the road for Mighty Food Fight van

Bristol-based vegan food sellers

The Mighty Food Fight have ceased trading. The team, who became well-known in the town for their array of donuts and falafel-like balls, served their food out of a 1978 Citroen HY van.

According to popular blogger the Fat Gay Vegan: "I am terribly saddened to report the end of The Mighty Food Fight. Hannah and Isabel have decided to pack away their magic donut recipes and shutter up the food truck, as this much-adored Bristol business is wrapping up." Writing about the impact the business had for the profile of vegan food in the city he said: "They have made a profound difference."



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Bono sees light through his shades

U2 frontman Bono and his wife Alison have reportedly become vegans. Bono has been criticised before for being outspoken on issues impacted by livestock, including world hunger, but refusing to put his money where his mouth is. But now he says: "I thought it was pretty silly of me to, on the one hand, raise awareness of the plight of our hungry in Africa while, on the other hand, continue eating meat, dairy and eggs which require enormous quantities of Africa's grain and plants in their production. I suppose you could say that I have quite literally seen the light through my shades."

Vegan Tory MP now 'drinking milk'

Andrea Jenkyns, the Tory MP who ousted Ed Balls from his Morley and Outwood seat in a shock victory in May, is reportedly no longer a vegan. During an interview with the Yorkshire Post soon after the election, Andrea said: "I suspect I may be the only Conservative MP who is also a vegan and against fox hunting." But a member of her office told Vegan Life magazine that she may have started drinking milk again. The speculation comes as a further blow to the representation of vegans in Westminster. Prior to the general election, there were three but Cathy Jamieson for Kilmarnock and Loudoun and Chris Williamson for Derby North lost their posts leaving just incumbent Kerry McCarthy for Bristol East.

Pollution destroying the sea's creatures

Shocking video footage of a sea turtle with a drinking straw lodged in his nose has prompted scientists to warn of the dangers of plastic pollution – again. Researchers, including Dr Nathan J. Robinson, a post-doctoral fellow who specializes in sea turtles at Indiana-Purdue University, discovered a turtle struggling to breathe. The creature had the plastic item blocking his nose – which could have been there for some time. The team managed to remove the straw with difficulty, and observed the turtle before releasing him back into the sea. Nathan said: "There is a solution and it lies in our own decisions. Please say no to all single-use plastic. Every plastic straw, plastic bag, or plastic bottle that ends up in the oceans could mean the difference between life or death for any number of marine animals."

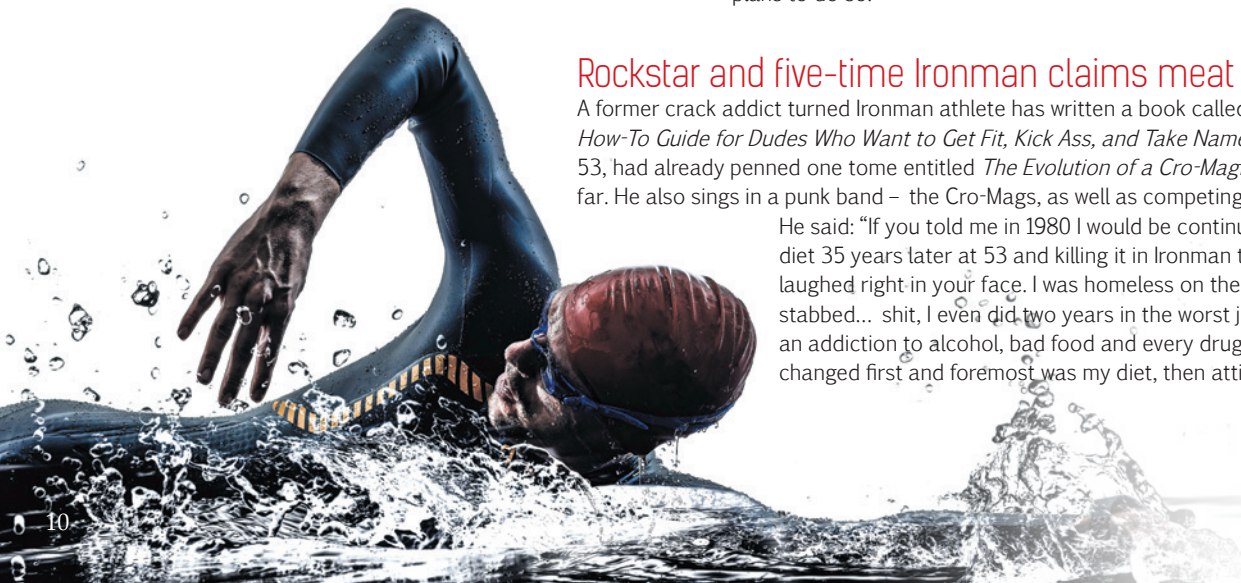
Sainsbury's quash mince panic

Mince lovers were disappointed to hear Sainsbury's had added egg to their meatless mince, making it unsuitable for vegans. The rumour started on Facebook, where many people voiced their upset. But according to the supermarket giant, it is not true. A spokeswoman told Vegan Life: "I have spoken to our products technologist here and found out we haven't made any changes to the by Sainsbury's Meatfree Mince recipe and don't have any plans to do so."

Rockstar and five-time Ironman claims meat is for 'pussies'

A former crack addict turned Ironman athlete has written a book called *Meat is for Pussies: A How-To Guide for Dudes Who Want to Get Fit, Kick Ass, and Take Names*. Author John Joseph, 53, had already penned one tome entitled *The Evolution of a Cro-Magnon*, about his life so far. He also sings in a punk band – the Cro-Mags, as well as competing in the Ironman events.

He said: "If you told me in 1980 I would be continuing a plant-based diet 35 years later at 53 and killing it in Ironman triathlons I would have laughed right in your face. I was homeless on the streets at 14, got shot, stabbed... shit, I even did two years in the worst juvenile prisons and had an addiction to alcohol, bad food and every drug under the sun. What changed first and foremost was my diet, then attitude followed."



People power is energy source behind solar farm

An environmentally-conscious group of residents in East Sussex have clubbed together to build a solar farm. If planning permission is granted, the solar farm will reportedly generate power for up to 900 homes. A community interest company - Cuckmere Community Solar - has been set up to oversee the project. Chairman Dr Alister Scott said: "Solar technology now puts power in our hands, giving us the opportunity to generate clean power and local revenue that we can do great things with. We aim, each year, to help 25-50 homes to install better, cheaper, and cleaner heating, lighting and insulation." The farm would be based close to an existing solar farm near Berwick Station. Alister added: "Susenco, the developer which built the Berwick Solar farm, committed in 2013 to offering local ownership. This project brings that commitment to life on land that they originally prepared for their planning application."



UN come together to protect world's wildlife

All 193 member countries of the UN have signed a resolution to put stronger measures in place to protect wildlife. Emmanuel Issoze-Ngonget, minister for foreign affairs, international cooperation and regional integration of Gabon, drafted the resolution. It calls on countries to boost courts and law enforcement to protect wildlife, and encourages communities to join the fight against poaching, trafficking, and selling illicit goods taken or made from threatened animals. He claims the illicit wildlife trade poses risks to the environment, health and the economies of countries, undermining the stability of local businesses, diminishing investment and

threatening viable development programmes, and is a source of national and regional instability, involving armed groups and contributing to the proliferation of illegal weapons. The UN's UK delegate said the text demonstrated a 'powerful and growing consensus that the illegal trade in wildlife must be stopped'.



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A voice for animals at major film festival

A major international film competition has launched a category dedicated to animal rights – for the first time ever. This month's Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF) will host a programme called 'Compassion, Justice and Animal rights', which is described as a platform for filmmakers to share meaningful information, stories of inspiration, and tools for creating a safe and humane world for animals. According to HIFF artistic director Davide Nugent: "Billions of animals continue to be abused every day and denied their basic right to life and protection against violence and cruelty. This new signature program will allow the festival to join the important film movement that brings justice to animals, an effort that has been increasing impact and visibility worldwide."

Vegan 'call to arms' after Pret launches veggie consultation

High Street sandwich favourite Pret a Manger launched a public consultation about how to best present its vegetarian options. According to CEO Clive Schlee: "Sales of our vegetarian sandwiches and salads have grown 12.5 per cent in the last six months - faster than our meaty products - and falafel and halloumi is now our top selling hot wrap." Because of this increase in sales, Clive asked readers whether they wanted to see all-veggie branches of the chain open, more veggie options on the shelves, or no change. On his blog, he wrote: "There were almost ten thousand responses and, as seems typical of recent referendums, the result was clear but close: 52 per cent voted in favour of a special vegetarian fridge, versus 44 per cent in favour of an exclusively vegetarian Pret and just 4 per cent for the status quo." He added: "There was a strong call to arms from vegans, a movement that is clearly growing in popularity."



Record breaking runner's tips on training diet

Vegan ultra-runner Scott Jurek has revealed some of the dietary tricks behind his stamina. The athlete, who recently broke the record for running the Appalachian trail by completing the course in 46 days, blasted claims that all he eats is 'fruit and nuts'. He said: "People assume that you can't get full off a plant-based diet, but it really comes down to the amount of food you eat, and getting enough healthy fats. I'm one of these people that likes to eat. When I'm training to come out on top and win races, I'll need 5,000 to 6,000 calories a day. I was on the trail for 13, 14 hours a day at first—and then, later, it became 16, 18 hours a day. Sometimes 20. I was getting less and less sleep, and my metabolism was just raging. I needed to consume 7,000 calories or more a day."

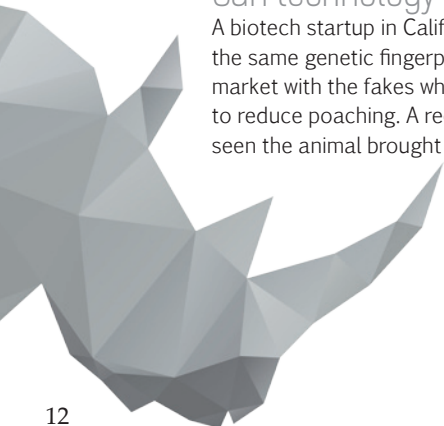


Charity calls for animal welfare classes in schools

Animal charity bosses are claiming some cruelty cases are a result of ignorance. The ISPCA (Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) saw an increased number of calls – over 21,000 - made to its helpline in the last year. Chief operating officer Andrew Kelly has claimed some of these cases come about because people don't know what their legal responsibilities are when caring for an animal. He said: "The ISPCA would like to see animal welfare taught to primary school children as part of the curriculum, and we are intent on lobbying the government to make this happen. In the meantime, every time there is a successful prosecution, the ISPCA will do its best to get the message out there that abusing animals, in any way, will not be tolerated."

Can technology save the rhinos?

A biotech startup in California has printed fake 3D rhino horns – which carry the same genetic fingerprint as the real thing. The company plan to flood the market with the fakes which will be sold at one eighth of the cost in an attempt to reduce poaching. A recent surge in poaching throughout Africa and Asia has seen the animal brought to the brink of extinction. The startup – Pembient in San Francisco – uses keratin and rhino DNA to make a powder, which is then 3D printed onto synthetic horns. Matthew Markus, CEO of Pembient says: "In the drug trade, usually a cutting agent is something that's cheaper and inferior to the product being cut. But if we can offer something as good as the product being cut but vastly cheaper, then anyone in the trade will naturally gravitate to using our product."





YVONNE

Happy ending after great escape

A slaughter-bound cow, who escaped certain death then spent over three months hiding in a forest has been taken in by a sanctuary. Yvonne, the six year old cow, ran away from a German farm. The search for her turned into an international story, with one newspaper offering \$14,500 for her capture. But she managed to evade police, good Samaritans and hunters for almost 100 days. When she was finally caught, it was reportedly by another farmer who claimed she had gone into his meadow to make friends with the cows. She had to be tranquilised before being escorted to the Gut Aiderbal sanctuary – where she was reunited with her son and sister, who had also been rescued.



Brits can now gobble US vegan range

American meat replacement favourite Tofurky has finally launched in the UK. While some retailers sold the products before, they could be expensive and difficult to find. But now the UK range, which will include smoky maple bacon tempeh and a variety of sausages among other products, will be available from some Holland and Barrett Stores, with Wholefoods and Planet Organic also stocking the range. According to Tofurky company chairman Seth Tibbott: "We're serious about creating versatile and believable food which does good for the body, environment and animal friends alike. It's all we're about and we couldn't wait to share Tofurky with UK retailers. Britain is the birthplace of the modern vegetarian movement, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to introduce Tofurky to such an informed and sophisticated market."

Thames a thriving habitat for marine mammals

Fifty years after being declared 'biologically extinct', the River Thames is teeming with marine life. A recent study by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) has found the river is home to a diverse range of creatures. According to the report, there have been 2723 public sightings in the last decade – with seals being spotted most often. Surprisingly, there were 444 sightings of porpoises and dolphins. Joanna Barker, European conservation projects manager at ZSL, said: "Many people looking into the Thames see a murky, dirty environment. But, actually, beneath the waves, it is full of life. We have a huge range of fish and invertebrates, and also top predators."



McCartney cuts ties with 'responsible' wool supplier after video reveals disturbing cruelty

Shocking video footage of wool farms in Argentina has prompted fashion designer and long-time vegetarian Stella McCartney to cut ties with them. All farms are part of the Ovis 21 network, which aims to source merino wool 'sensibly'. The video, obtained by Peta, reportedly shows workers kneeling on conscious lambs and sawing through the animals' necks with their knives, causing them to bleed and vomit as they struggle. Stella said: "After conducting our own investigation in Argentina and throughout our supply chain, following a very distressful viewing of Peta US footage, we immediately ceased buying wool from Ovis 21. We are deeply saddened and shocked by the cruelty seen on the footage, as animal welfare is at the heart of everything we do. We are now even more determined to continue our fight for animal rights in fashion together and monitor even more closely all the suppliers involved in this industry." Peta US is filing a complaint with Argentinean authorities, citing Argentina's federal animal-protection law.



Glorious grouse too good for the table

Animal welfare campaigners are urging top restaurants to remove grouse from their menus. The League Against Cruel Sports has contacted eateries across England and Wales pointing out that while the shooting of grouse is promoted as a natural and sustainable way of providing food for the table, it is actually far from it. This is due to the impact of shooting on 'non-target' animals – including those caught in snares which are placed to 'protect' game birds, as well as mountain hares who are shot, and birds of prey who predate grouse. Tom Quinn, director of campaigns for the LACS, said: "Millions of other animals and birds are deliberately killed to protect the grouse shooting industry. The environment is being devastated by the burning of grouse moors, and millions of tonnes of lead shot are left to poison the countryside. Add to that the fact that tax payers are subsidising the shooting industry to the tune of several million pounds per year, and it all adds up to the Glorious Twelfth being nothing more than a shallow PR attempt to hide what is an atrociously out-dated and unsustainable practice."



The power of One Direction

Controversial aqua park SeaWorld has taken another blow – after pop star Harry Styles told fans not to visit 'if [they] like dolphins'. The comments made during a concert in San Diego came just as SeaWorld was starting to recover from the damage caused by 2013 documentary Blackfish, which uncovered the park's treatment of captive orca whales. The brand saw a huge rise in online negative commentary, with one analyst saying: "We believe two events were the main contributors to the 400 per cent spike in mentions and 13 per cent increase in negative commentary month-over-month. Namely allegations that a SeaWorld employee acted as an undercover member of activist group Peta and One Direction lead singer, Harry Styles, urged all of his fans to boycott SeaWorld during a concert in San Diego."

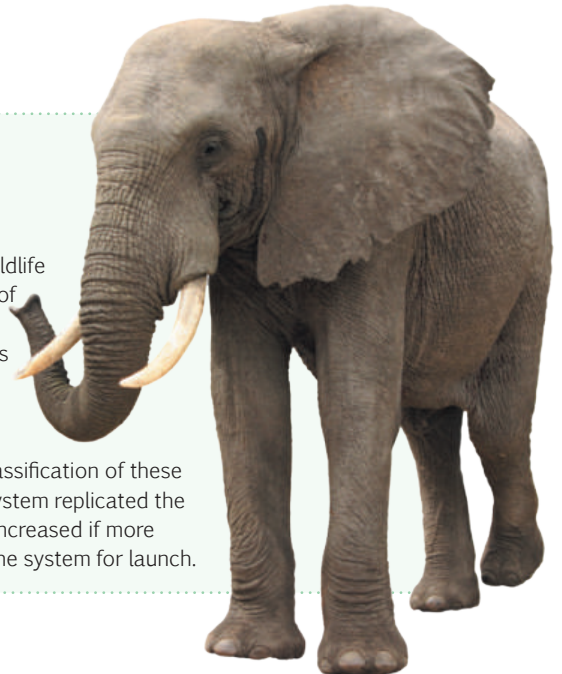


UFC heavyweight switching to plant power?

Ultimate Fighting Champion legend Mark Hunt has suggested he may be embracing veganism. The combat sportsman, who has won several world championship titles, posted a video showing horrific animal cruelty at a pig farm. Mark, currently ranked number seven in the world, wrote: "I'm going vegan hate this." The video, shot at Christensen Farms, America's fourth-largest pig producer and a supplier to Walmart, shows a catalogue of violence towards pigs and piglets. The animals face abuse from workers, and can be seen suffering, living out their short lives in an environment that has been described as 'grotesque'.

New computer system could help curb sales of illegal hunting trophies

A new computer system developed at the University of Kent could help in the battle against the online sale of illegal hunting trophies, ivory and other illegal wildlife products. It is currently extremely difficult – and expensive – to identify the sale of such items. But now law enforcement agencies and conservationists will be able to make use of the system to help their ongoing fight. A search for items listed as 'ivory' throws up a multitude of responses – for instance ivory-coloured wedding dresses – making the task of tracking down illegal products akin to finding a needle in a haystack. In addition, criminals usually avoid using the term 'ivory' to bypass online bans. However the automated system can mimic human expert classification of these items at a fraction of the cost and thousands of times faster. In tests, the new system replicated the success of the human experts with a 93 per cent accuracy rate, which could be increased if more information such as images were added. The team are now working to develop the system for launch.





Slaughterhouse bankrupt months after cruelty exposé

A Yorkshire slaughterhouse has gone into administration – just months after undercover filming revealed violence towards the animals. The film by Animal Aid, taken at Bowood Yorkshire Lamb in Thirsk, showed sheep being kicked in the face, smashed into solid objects headfirst and picked up and hurled by their legs, fleeces, throats, and ears. The footage, which has been handed to the Food Standards Agency, was initially released in February this year, creating a media storm. Animal Aid director Andrew Tyler said the group's work shows the necessity for CCTV cameras in all UK slaughterhouses. He added: "The regulatory and political authorities have delayed for too long. The comprehensive evidence we have presented makes clear that cameras will have a significantly beneficial effect. There must be no further delay in requiring their mandatory installation."

A step up from cold beans

Lucky students in over 500 colleges and universities in America can now choose from a range of vegan canteen options. Following customer requests, on campuses including the University of South Florida, catering company Aramark are offering plant-based choices for every meal. According to Aramark executive chef Scott Zahren: "Stemming from recent recipe development, items such as vegan pastries, breakfast breads and quinoa oatmeal are now available to students. During lunch and dinner, a variety of hearty entrees are offered, including a vegan sauté which features all whole grains and fresh, seasonal veggies as well as a collection of soy based proteins. In addition, we have over 80 vegan entrees for incorporation in our residential menus based on student feedback and request."



Could secret benefactor kill off badger cull?

A mysterious donor is offering £5000 cash to farmers to pull out of the badger cull in Gloucestershire. In order for a badger culling licence to be granted, at least 70 per cent of the land in the cull zone must be signed up to the scheme. Killing badgers is part of a Government drive to cut down on bovine TB, but campaigners claim the plans are unscientific, uneconomical, and cruel. According to Jay Tiernan, spokesman of Stop the Cull group, this mysterious financial offer is very exciting. He said: "Documents released by Defra show that the Gloucestershire cull zone has exactly 70 per cent sign up, so the tiniest of smallholders pulling out would end culling permanently. We know that many farmers have only signed up to the cull after being bullied by the National Farmers' Union and aren't happy with being involved. We hope that this financial incentive will help them see sense and choose to vaccinate badgers rather than kill them."

A voice for the foxes

For the first time in its history this year's Buckinghamshire County Show featured an anti-foxhunting stall. The county show represents a slice of the rural and agricultural sector, and traditionally hosts blood sport enthusiasts including the Countryside Alliance, as well as a parade of blood hounds. But according to Katie Angus, who ran the stall with three other people, the show is too one-sided in favour of hunting. She said: "There was a steady flow of visitors to our stand, and lots of people who stopped by. Some to voice their support and encouragement for what we were doing, some who wanted to give us their pro hunt views, most of who did so respectfully, and the odd person who just wanted to have a go at us, which we were prepared for. One pro hunt supporter commended our efforts and said they were pleased we were there to reflect a balanced view." Charlotte Cooper, spokeswoman for the Countryside Alliance claims hunting in an integral part of agricultural shows. She said: "For the show to go ahead without local hunts would be unthinkable."



VEGANdiary

October 24

Kent Vegan Festival

The first Kent Vegan Festival will be held in Canterbury. The aim of the event is to raise awareness about veganism as a holistic, healthy, environmentally sustainable and intrinsically non-violent way of life. Organisers have said the event will be inclusive and welcoming, with the aim of encouraging all people in their vegan journey.

facebook.com/events/269778456564510/

October 24-25

West Midlands Vegan Festival

For the first time, this fair will spread over two days. Attractions will include over 100 stalls, cookery demos, talks and a bar. It will be held at the Civic Centre in Wolverhampton, hosted by Midlands Vegan Campaigns.

veganmidlands.org.uk

November 7

Dorchester Vegan Fair

Dorchester's first vegan fair will host over 30 stalls, stocking cruelty-free food, drinks and gifts. It will take place at the Corn Exchange. Tickets cost £1 for adults and young people aged 15 or over. Children aged 14 or under can go for free. Tickets are available on the door, using cash only.

dorchesterveganfair.co.uk

NORTHERN vegan FESTIVAL



October 17

Northern Vegan Festival

After last year's Blackpool event, this one-day festival moves back to Manchester city centre, where it's spread across four venues. Events will take place at the Sachas Hotel, Methodist Church in Oldham Street, V Revolution vegan café and the Thirsty Scholar pub.

The venues will be divided into separate rooms for talks and cookery demos. The workshops includes topics such as skin care, factory farming, children's book reading, and making the vegan connection. There will also be talks on the dairy industry, raw veganism and a film screening of The Cove – a documentary about dolphin hunting in Japan.

There will be a huge number of stalls, run by food and drink makers, caterers, and animal welfare organisations including Animal Aid and the Hillside Animal Sanctuary. There will also be stalls covering a wide area of interests including running and politics.

Entertainment will also take place and children can be entertained by a series of special events throughout the day.

The festival is run by volunteers, with all proceeds going to animal welfare charities.

All venues and rooms are fully accessible to people in wheelchairs via lifts.

northernveganfestival.com



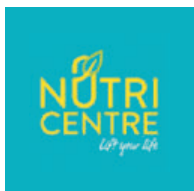
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VEGAN PLANET

Vegan news from around the world

America: Fighting for farm animals

Animal charities across Massachusetts have joined forces to put an end to animals living their entire lives in cages barely bigger than their bodies. The coalition - Citizens for Farm Animal Protection - includes the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Animal Rescue League of Boston among others. It aims to collect more than 90,000 signatures on a petition, so the proposal can be put forward for a public vote in 2016. The petition calls for improvements in farming conditions, so certain farm animals would be able to stand up, lie down, turn around and extend their limbs by phasing out the extreme confinement of breeding pigs, veal calves and egg-laying hens. Mary Nee, president of the Animal Rescue League of Boston, said: "The cruel confinement of farm animals is inhumane and also threatens the health and safety of Massachusetts residents through increased risk of foodborne illness. When there's an effort to improve the protection and treatment of animals - whether they are companion, working or farm animals - the Animal Rescue League of Boston is there to help."



Italy: Victory for vegan mother in baby diet case

A court in Italy has ruled in favour of vegan diets for babies. The case, which took place in the northern Alto Adige region, was brought after a nursery asked for medical proof of a 10 month old's health after his mother outlined his nutritional requirements. When the mother refused to supply the information, the boy was expelled. In court, the mother said the benefits of veganism are scientifically proven - and the expulsion of her son was unfair and disproportionate. The court ruled in favour of the mother with a decision described as 'ground breaking', and the mother's lawyer Carlo Prisco saying the outcome would be 'useful in future cases when institutions and public administrations attempt to stop citizens from exercising their right to make ethical dietary choices.'



Costa Rica: A step back on road to freedom

In 2013, it was announced that Costa Rica would shut its zoos, and release all captive animals into the wild - making it the first country to do so. It is also the first country to ban hunting for sport, and it stopped the use of animals in circuses in 2002. But a court ruling earlier this year meant the country is contractually obliged to keep two zoos open for another decade. The government wants to turn the zoos into cage free bio parks and activists are continuing to appeal for this to happen. Environmental Minister René Castro said: "We are getting rid of the cages and reinforcing the idea of interacting with biodiversity in botanical parks in a natural way. We don't want animals in captivity or enclosed in any way unless it is to rescue or save them."



Spain: Books not bloodshed

A council in Spain has decided to use its annual bullfighting subsidy to pay for books and school supplies. Villafranca de los Caballeros, around 80 miles south of Madrid, usually celebrates its local fiesta with a bullfight in September. But the newly-elected socialist mayor Julián Bolaños said: "It's a question of priorities. There is a lot of unemployment in this town and many people simply don't have money to buy school supplies for their children." He added while he is not a fan of bullfighting, the decision was a financial, and not personal one. He said if any other company wanted to take on the cost of hosting a bullfight, they could. Apparently, the decision has been a popular one. He claimed: "Even people who love bullfights have called me to say that they agree with us."



Devastating diseases
needn't devastate
animal lives as well

epilepsy cystic fibrosis
asthma pa
Alzheimer's
sepsis multiple sclerosis
diabetes mening
Parkinson's disease
diabetes Alzhe
AIDS asthma epileps
cancer pneumoni
pain heart disease
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Taiwan: Cruel pigeon racing industry's days numbered?

Three club officials and 32 alleged pigeon racers have been charged with illegal gambling in Taiwan, following a Peta US investigation. After the animal rights group filed a complaint with authorities, the Kaohsiung District Prosecutors Office investigated the Kaohsiung Zhong Zheng pigeon-racing club. Those charged with gambling crimes include the president, secretary and bookkeeper, who were charged for organising the club's winter pigeon-race series, during which thousands of pigeons are crammed into crates, loaded onto a cargo ship and released up to almost 200 miles off shore. Peta director Mimi Bekhechi said: "Peta US' investigation into this cruel blood sport revealed that pigeons pay with their lives for gamblers' illegal high-stakes bets. These charges prove that this violent and cruel industry's days are numbered."





Yours Naturally, Naturally Yours

These all natural skin products are seriously effective. As well as ticking the vegan and cruelty free boxes, the products are made in tiny batches

by hand, using artisanal methods. The philosophy behind the company is to leave the smallest footprint possible – but how does that translate into results? The elixir serum is multi-purpose, and lovely to use, with a fresh smell. A little of this oil-based product goes a long way and I discovered it was great on a burn, as well as nice as an evening face treatment, leaving my skin feeling instantly softer. For me, the test of a brand is their lip balm, and this certainly came up trumps, with a hearty dose of cocoa butter which glided onto the lips with good staying power.

ynny.co.uk

Microplane spiral cutter

The trend for spiralizing vegetables shows no sign of abating – look inside this issue for some delicious recipes. Microplane's nifty handheld gadget has two blades, for large and small vegetables, so you can turn a variety of your five a day into perfect spiral-shaped noodles, which are great in place of carb-heavy pasta in dishes with sauces, and also in salads. If you want to try spiralizing without committing to a bigger or more expensive machine, this is a good option. The blades are sharp enough to avoid blockages, or a mushy mess.

microplaneintl.com



Soapnut Shampoo

Soapnuts are dried shells which can be used as an alternative to chemical cleaners. They are totally hypoallergenic, very sustainable, and can be used for many things – as a multi-purpose cleaner, clothes detergent – and now, shampoo.

This vegan society approved rosemary and marshmallow shampoo smells delicious. It is so gentle it can be used as a body, or even face wash too. But that doesn't mean it doesn't do the job. After lathering up, my hair felt clean, and was deliciously, but not overpoweringly, scented. It left my locks with a definite sheen and softness that lasted for a couple of days. This shampoo combines a good, natural product with an ethically-sourced ingredient.

soapnuts.co.uk

WHAT'S NEW?

We love innovative ideas, clever twists on old faves and canny nutritional tweaks. Anything that makes vegan life easier, tastier and more fun. Here are our latest finds...



Suma organic coconut oil

Coconut oil is enjoying something of a moment, popular for its versatility and health-giving properties. This oil made by Suma boasts a special 'quick after harvest' production method, so the oil is pressed from the flesh of the coconut within 48 hours of it being picked. This means you have a nutrient-rich oil, which also benefits local farmers, as processing at source increases the value of the coconut. Like other brands it is solid at room temperatures, but liquefies extremely easily, into a soft and fragrant oil, which smells delicious during cooking, but has a mild flavour that isn't too

strong. This makes it excellent for a whole range of dishes – including perfect roast potatoes. suma.coop

Delicious outside

Now the outside of your presents can be as vegan as the inside – with nut roast-inspired wrapping paper. Becka Griffin – a top 100 Etsy seller – illustrated the festive paper due to her own love of a good veggie roast. The design features sprouts, carrots, potatoes, parsnips and nut roast, as well as gravy-boat gift tags. This hand drawn piece is a humorous take on seasonal decorations.

beckagriffin.etsy.com

Forward
Planning



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www.kokodairyfree.com

AQUAFABA

The curious liquid that's making a splash



Every so often a vegan alternative will crop up that is truly mind blowing – and aquafaba certainly hits that mark. Touted as an egg replacer it is surprisingly simple yet effective. But what exactly is it?

Aquafaba is the liquid from a can of chickpeas. This liquid is similar in consistency to raw egg white, and can be treated the same way in a number of recipes. It can be used in baking, or whipped to a meringue-like consistency. It can even be used as a binder in veggie burger recipes. The flavour is very mild, and usually indiscernible.

To create a meringue-like substance, the liquid should be strained and whipped at a high speed. It will form peaks, at which point sugar can be added.

Unlike commercial egg replacers, it is a natural and healthy alternative – some purists avoid pre-made mixes because of their processed nature.

The story behind aquafaba is as interesting as the substance itself - it was discovered by an online community of vegans searching for egg white alternatives, and its popularity grew organically – by word of mouth and across forums and social media groups. Experiments were undertaken using flax, various types of fruit, and saponins (complex components found in a number of plants). People would report back with their findings, and the experiments would evolve.

During this process, in December 2014, a French man called Joel Roessel discovered that liquid from cooked chickpeas can be whipped into a foam. He tested the foam by making a vegan meringue and other desserts. But while effective, his recipes were too technical to be adopted by most people. A video showcasing his discovery was released the following February.

According to aquafaba.com, the current authority on the substance, an American software engineer called Goose Wohlt was inspired by the video. The site says: “Goose discovered that stable vegan meringue can be made without all the extra processed ingredients, provided the right composition and techniques are used.

“This crucial accessibility meant that anyone in the world could use the ubiquitous liquid from legumes as a general egg replacer by itself, overcoming all the remaining obstacles in vegan meringue making. More than that, it opened up a whole new world of possibilities, including other confectionery like marshmallows and commercial powders based on recognizable ingredients with minimal processing.”

Goose shared this information on Facebook where a new group – Vegan Meringues Hits and Misses – was set up so others could update the community on their successes and failures using this mysterious solution.

The aquafaba community continues to grow, and with it, the number of recipes, tips and tricks.

From a scientific point of view, there is some disagreement about exactly why works the way it does. The liquid has some of the properties of both egg white and yolk, which makes it unique among other replacers. It is believed the proteins and starches mimic the proteins in eggs in some way.

But until a formal chemical and nutritional analysis is released publicly, the community can only theorise about how the chemical composition of drained chickpea water can create that most elusive of recipes – the perfect vegan meringue.

Chocolate Chip and Peanut Butter Mousse Serves 3 – 4

- 400g (14oz) tin chickpeas, drain the water to use in this recipe and reserve the chickpeas for another dish
 - 100g (3½oz) dark chocolate
 - 2 tsp icing sugar
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - 100g (3½oz) dark chocolate chips
 - 3 tbsp peanut butter (or more if you like)
1. Melt the chocolate in a bain-marie (a bowl high over a pan of gently simmering water). Stir in the vanilla extract and leave to cool.
 2. Whisk up the room temperature chickpea water until you have soft peaks, then add the icing sugar and whisk a little more.
 3. Fold the cooled chocolate into the meringue, then fold in the chocolate chips.
 4. Fill 3 to 4 glasses with chocolate mousse and add a dollop of peanut butter to each glass.
 5. Chill until required. Enjoy!



ON THE COVER...

This aquafaba recipe can be adapted to make two delicious flavours

Raspberry Rose Macarons

Makes 25

Macaron Shells

- 250g (9oz) aquafaba
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp cream of tartar
- Pinch of salt
- 150g (5oz) ground almonds
- 130g (4½oz) pure icing sugar
- 110g (4oz) superfine/caster sugar
- A drop of vegan red food colouring
- A few drops of organic rose extract

Raspberry Rose Buttercream

- 135g (½ cup) vegan butter substitute
- 55g (2oz) icing sugar
- ½ tbsp non dairy milk
- A few drops of organic rose extract
- 25 raspberries



Recipes and images from *Crazy Vegan Kitchen*.
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crazyvegankitchen.com



Mint Chocolate Chip Macarons

Makes 25

Macaron Shells

- 250g (9oz) aquafaba
- 1/8 tsp cream of tartar
- Pinch of salt
- 150g (5oz) ground almonds
- 130g (4½oz) pure icing sugar
- 110g (4oz) superfine/caster sugar
- A drop of green food colouring
- A few drops of organic mint extract
- Cocoa, for dusting

Mint Choc Chip Buttercream

- 135g (½ cup) vegan butter substitute
- 55g (2oz) icing sugar
- ½ tbsp non dairy milk
- A few drops of organic mint extract
- 30g (1oz) vegan dark chocolate, grated

Mint Chocolate Ganache

- 50g (1½oz) vegan dark chocolate
- 40g (½ cup) non dairy milk (I use soy)
- Few drops organic mint extract
- Tiny pinch of salt

1. The night before you want to make your macarons, prepare your aquafaba. In a small saucepan, bring 250g of aquafaba to a simmer. Let this simmer away until it has reduced to 110g (3½oz). I pour it out and weigh it on a kitchen scale a few times in-between to check. Once it has reached 110g, pour it into a bowl to cool and then refrigerate overnight.
2. Macaron shells: Process ground almonds and icing sugar in a food processor and then sieve into a bowl, making sure there are no lumps in your mixture. Set aside.
3. With a stand mixer fitted with a clean bowl and with clean beaters, whisk the aquafaba, cream of tartar and salt on high till it turns foamy and resembles frothed up egg whites. Make sure there is no more liquid left at the bottom of the bowl before moving on to the next step.
4. Gradually add caster sugar in, bit by bit, whilst your mixer is turned on. Add your food colouring and mint or rose extract in and then continue whisking on high for another minute. You should end up with a thick, glossy meringue.
5. Tip half of your almond/icing sugar mixture into the meringue, and fold gently with spatula until it has incorporated with the meringue. Add the second half of your almond/icing sugar mixture, and continue to fold it into the batter. You don't have to be too gentle with this, but you don't want to go crazy either. Once your mixture has been incorporated, continue folding until you end up with a thick, smooth mixture. Do not over-mix or your batter will be too runny and you will end up with misshapen macarons. You will know that you have reached the right consistency when you dollop a tablespoon of batter onto a flat surface and it gradually smoothens out into a nice round shape, without any "nipples" forming on top.
6. Fill a piping bag fitted with a round nozzle with macaron mixture and pipe into 2 inch rounds on a Silpat or silicone baking paper lined mat. This recipe makes enough to make 50 individual macaron shells, so you may need to have 3 or 4 trays ready. Once piped, slam the tray down on your kitchen counter to eliminate any air bubbles in your piped macaron mixture. Dust some cocoa on the shells if you are making the mint variety. Leave your trays to rest in a cool area for 2-3 hours. They are ready to bake when they have turned matt and you are able to gently touch the surface of the shells without anything sticking to your finger.
7. Preheat oven to 135°C (275°F). Bake each tray of macarons individually for 22-25 minutes, without opening the oven door in between. Smaller macarons or ovens may take slightly more or less than 25 minutes. It's all about trial and error. Remove tray from oven and leave to cool thoroughly before peeling macaron shells off the paper. Repeat baking process with remaining trays of macarons.
8. Filling: In a stand mixer, whisk vegan butter with icing sugar, non dairy milk, mint or rose extract and food colouring. Add in grated chocolate if making the mint variety. Whisk till fluffy and then transfer to a piping bag fitted with a round nozzle.
9. Mint Chocolate Ganache (mint variety only): In a small pot, heat non dairy milk till it comes to a simmer. Pour over your dark chocolate and then add in salt and mint extract. Stir until you have a smooth, glossy ganache. Leave in the fridge to thicken, stirring once in a while until ready to use.
10. Assembly: Once you have gently peeled off all your macarons from your Silpat/Silicone Paper, place them on a kitchen counter with the bottom side up (rounded side down). Using your spray bottle, lightly mist the bottoms of the macarons with water and leave for 5 minutes before filling.
11. To fill, pipe a ring of buttercream around the base of a macaron and place some mint chocolate ganache in the empty circle inside your buttercream if making the mint variety, or a whole raspberry if making the raspberry variety. Sandwich with another macaron shell and repeat the process till all your shells have been sandwiched.
12. Place macarons into a box and leave in the fridge overnight, or ideally for 2 nights so that they have time to mature and form the right texture. Macarons are best served at room temperature or 10 minutes out of the refrigerator, not straight out from the fridge.



TROUBLED WATERS

The live export row continues

The campaign against live animal export has been dealt a harsh blow, after Thanet District Council in Kent was forced to make a £2.3 million pay out to exporters for blocking the transport of animals through Ramsgate Port.

Live export is the movement of animals across borders for profit. The trade faces huge opposition, not only from animal welfare charities, but from the wider public and a number of MPs.

A survey by the RSPCA last year showed seven out of 10 Brits oppose the trade in which the animals – generally sheep – are shipped from the south east coast, currently Ramsgate. The Port of Dover has also been used, but has currently suspended the crossings as the berth used by the exporters’ has been taken out of commission for refurbishment. The Port of Ipswich in Suffolk has also been used in the past.

The campaigners object to the horrific conditions the animals are forced to endure. These animals – some only a few weeks old – are

crammed into trucks for hours while they travel across the UK, with hours more on the road after the boat journey to Calais. The Channel crossing can take up to eight hours on a former soviet tank carrier called the MV Joline. Campaigners have described it as the ‘death ship’ and even some pro-live exporters have admitted off the record the ship is not suitable for use, with animals dying during the gruelling journey.

The National Farmers Union (NFU) has defended the trade, with a spokesman saying it is valuable for English farmers – partly due to a demand for live animals for ritual (Halal) slaughter. This is when animals are hung and have their throats slit without being stunned first – a controversial practice which is banned in several countries including Sweden, Denmark and Norway. With the Muslim festival of Eid taking place in September, a spike in demand for lambs is usually seen during the month.

According to a spokesman for the NFU the sheep are worth more if they are fattened and slaughtered abroad. The organisation says

the trade must be 'put into perspective' as there is 'nothing illegal or inherently wrong about moving animals from one part of Europe to another, provided they are well-cared for both in transit and in rearing'. The spokesman adds: "Regulations are in place at a UK and EU level to ensure that all animal transport, including that going overseas, is not detrimental to animal health. It is not in the commercial interests of anyone in the livestock trade to transport animals in a way that results in sick, injured or stressed animals."

These regulations include the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the EU's Council Regulation 1/2005. Under these rules animals should be inspected by government employees to ensure they are in suitable health to undertake the journey. To an observer, these can seem woefully inadequate, with inspectors appearing to peer briefly through the slats before waving the sheep through.

The European Commission has studied the effectiveness of this legislation and found it has had a positive impact on welfare, but that standards could still be higher, and better enforcement is needed.

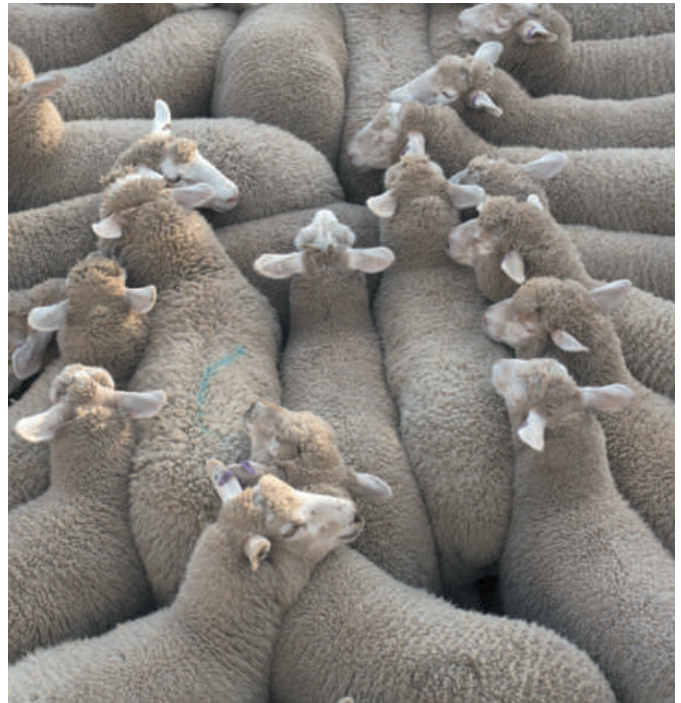
"I find it incredible to believe that in the 21st century we still allow legally a cruel, barbaric, medieval trade that should have been banned hundreds of years ago."

This is something campaigners would agree with. Ian Driver is a former Green Party councillor and prospective parliamentary candidate in Thanet, and active live export protestor. He describes the trade as an 'abomination' saying: "I find it incredible to believe that in the 21st century we still allow legally a cruel, barbaric, medieval trade that should have been banned hundreds of years ago. It's got to be stopped. I defy anybody to come down here, to see these lorries, to see the animals crushed together for hours, in their own urine, in their faeces – to smell that, to see that, to listen to the animals and say it's not cruel."

A horrific incident in 2012 led to Thanet District Council suspending exports from the port. On September 12 of that year, nearly 50 sheep were killed after a lorry was stopped at the port. The truck had reportedly been put together wrongly, so some of the sheep's limbs were coming out of the side of the vehicle. Due to these injuries, a number of sheep had to be put to sleep by the RSPCA. The exporter -Thomas Lomas- admitted transporting animals in a way likely to cause undue suffering and was given a suspended prison sentence.

After crossings were suspended, export companies claiming they were affected by the ban took the council to court, saying its decision breached EU regulations governing free trade – and the judge sided with them.

This is because under the Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act (1847), all ports must allow the free trade of goods and sadly, this includes farm animals. As European Union free trade laws state it is illegal to ban the export of animals to other EU countries, the government has said it would therefore be illegal to ban the trade.



Despite what the law says, locals are angry about the fine. Resident Jamie Weir said: "As a Thanet taxpayer, I am absolutely disgusted this massive payment of mine and other taxpayer's money has been made. It is a disgusting business, and one which I refuse to support."

"If this is how my council tax will be spent, propping up companies which profit from this savage, sickening trade, then I will think long and hard about paying taxes in the future."

Ian Driver agrees, describing the pay out as 'blood money'. He said: "I'm staggered that companies with convictions and fines for animal related criminality are able to claim millions in compensation from a public authority which acted in good faith to protect the welfare of the animals passing through its port."

"I believe the UK Government, UK Euro MPs, & commissioners along with the RSPCA and Compassion in World Farming should be lobbying hard to allow member state opt outs on the basis of animal welfare or other ethical considerations."

"As it currently stands, the law is a charter for industrial scale cruelty towards sentient beings which, in the name of humanity and compassion, must be ended."

And that is the issue – while the UK is part of the EU, until the legislation is amended, anti-exporters have no recourse. But as many people believe the transport of animals over these long distances is unacceptable as well as unnecessary, they will be fighting until a resolution is found.

Campaign group Kent Against Animal Live Export organises demonstrations at the port, as well as co-ordinating petitions, phone calls and letters to MPs. It is run by Ian and Yvonne Birchall.

Ian told Vegan Life: "We have a good number of people coming to demonstrate against it. Anyone is welcome to join us, as long as you want to oppose this terrible cruelty."

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EAT AND DRINK-VEGAN STYLE

The Garden Cheshire

Nestled in the leafy village of Hale in Cheshire is a little gem called The Garden. Championing the ethos of sustainability through sourcing local, seasonal produce, this organic café was the brainchild of Kate Donovan, who co-owns it. Her sister Laura, who is studying for a juice therapy qualification, is the café's official 'queen of juicing'.

The Garden caters for omnivores, but offers vegans lots of choices - and nearly all of the dishes can be customised to suit a plant-based diet.

Laura has been following a vegan lifestyle for around 18 months. "I first started juicing about six years ago to clear up some digestive problems, as well as eczema. I ended up going plant-based for health reasons, but dipped in and out of it. Doing it for myself wasn't enough. I learned more about the ethos behind veganism, and now I do it for compassionate reasons."

Her lifestyle explains the vegan-friendly menu, which is based on a carefully curated selection of dishes. "We will rotate some ingredients with the seasons," explains Laura. "At the moment we offer local spinach in the green juice for example, instead of kale, but we'll always let the customer know any changes. We don't like to have too big a menu - firstly, the choice can be overwhelming, but we also like our produce to be fresh, and the quality is the most important thing."

The brunch is very popular. The full English breakfast comes with some healthy and delicious twists, including a sweet potato hash brown and homemade baked beans. There are also vegan sausages on offer, which are extremely tasty.

Also highly recommended is the avocado toast, which comes on artisan bread with tomato, alkaline sprouted beans and basil oil, the chia-quinoa porridge and the breakfast jars, which look as delicious as they taste, with stacked fruits and other goodies filling up portable containers. The pancakes feel so indulgent they could be a dessert, but make a filling and healthy breakfast. The café has a large juice menu, as well as a good selection of hot drinks including coffee (which you can have with almond milk) as well as various herbal teas.

The lunch menu has a solid range of lighter options, including soup, as well as heartier fare like jacket potatoes stuffed with vegan chilli and stir-fried superfoods. Current favourites include the lentil burger and the rainbow pasta (a variety of spiralized vegetables) with quinoa 'meat' balls. The lentil burger will be changed to a black bean burger, and the salads will have an autumnal revamp when the menu is updated this month.

For those with a sweet tooth, there is also a strong selection of vegan desserts, including the excellent raw brownies, and the 'cheesecake' which is a customer favourite.

The atmosphere at The Garden is very relaxed and informal. There is table service, but you can help yourself to infused water (often with strawberries and cucumbers) from the bar.

"We felt the area was definitely ready for somewhere like this," says Laura. "It is a very health-conscious town. We want to cater to a whole spectrum of people, and it's good to see people who aren't vegan go for the plant-based option on the menu."

"I believe eating this way is about compassion - compassion for yourself, and for other creatures. There's a huge movement happening, and we are very pleased to be part of it."

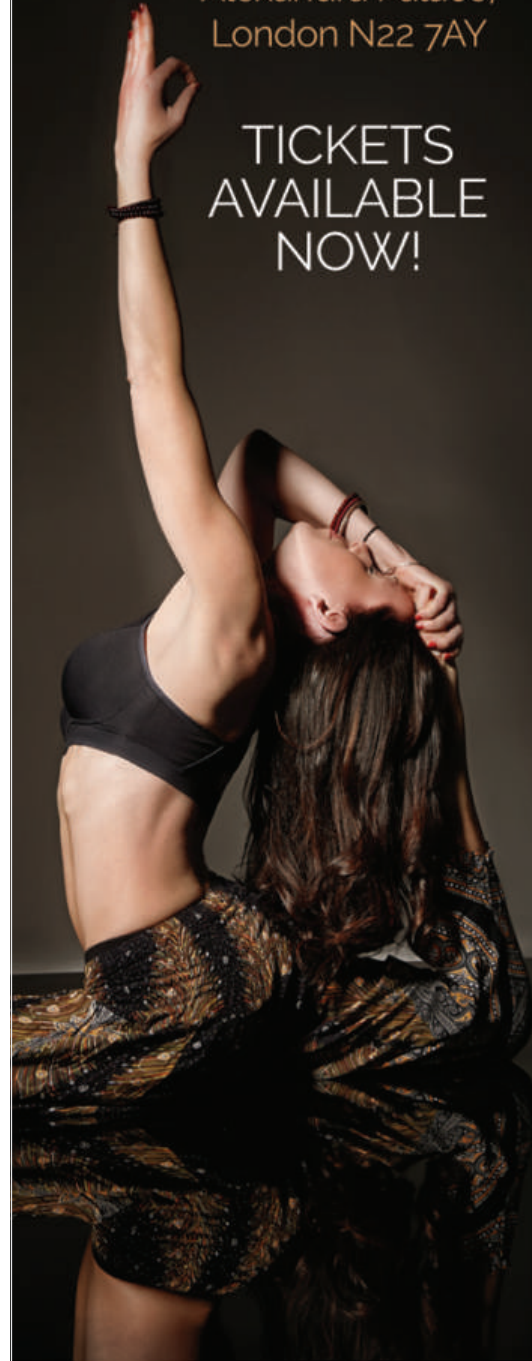
The Garden is on Ashley Road in Hale. You can call on 0161 941 6702 or email info@thegardenhale.co.uk. Visit thegardenhale.co.uk for more information.

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A TASTE OF AUTUMN

Enjoy these drinks, inspired by the season's flavours

When thinking of autumn it often feels as though the American alternative, fall, would be more appropriate. It offers the perfect counterpoint to spring and manages to describe the key change of the season in a single word.

Despite this, autumn conjures up a thousand images; from crunchy, russet brown leaves under foot to baked potatoes around a smoky fire. Autumn arrives on the equinox when day and night are equal, and continues through to the darkest night of winter solstice. Often changes in the animal and plant kingdoms will signal its arrival for all to see.

Autumn sees two significant events, Halloween and Bonfire Night, appear in quick succession. The first reminds many of childhood, of dressing up and collecting sweets from neighbours and that unmistakable smell of sugary treats. The second of cold evenings huddled by a fire eating warming bowls of soup.

It is perhaps from all these events we should take inspiration for what we drink at this time of year. As with other seasons the drinks should be a reflection of everything we can sense around us. Forget the sunshine yellows of summer and look for deep oranges and reds. Think amber ales the colour of fallen chestnut leaves or wines reminiscent of glowing embers. Aromas of caramel, nuts, dark fruits and spices should fill the nose.

Beers should have a strong caramel undertone with the same chewy mouthfeel as toffee. Many will display fruity and nutty characteristics formed during fermentation from the particular strain of yeast used. It is of course the perfect time for cider with apple orchards now covered in a carpet of fruit. Cider provides an ideal accompaniment to the earthy root vegetables so heavily featured on tables at this time of year. For wines we require something light-to medium-bodied, with a range of dark fruits and spicy flavours that also pair well with autumnal dishes, and warm us on cooler evenings.



Five AM Red Ale (5%) – BrewDog
RRP £1.75 for 330ml (Sainsburys)

BrewDog was created in 2007 by two people and a dog. The company now has over 350 employees, 14,500 shareholders and 26 bars. BrewDog are a key brewery in the craft beer movement where beer is brewed for taste and flavour above all else. Their bottles, adorned with tactile letterpress labels, are now ubiquitous appearing everywhere from Wetherspoons to Tesco. Five AM Red Ale is a reference to the five malts and 5 per cent ABV (alcohol by volume) of this beer. The combination of malts used creates a sweet caramel flavour which intensifies as it gets warmer. It's a super fruity and hoppy beer with notes of citrus and perfumed Seville oranges. The mouthfeel is really chewy akin to a toffee sweet. Five AM Red Ale pairs well with a spicy butternut squash burger or a simple apple pie.

All their beers are vegan-friendly unless they contain special ingredients (honey, lactose, etc).



Crushed Mixed Berries (4%) – Annings Cider
RRP £2.79 for 500ml (Various farm shops and garden centres)

Established in 2012, Annings Fruit Cider was designed to produce quality English fruit ciders to compete with the influx of Swedish imports that were flooding the UK market. They are made by Lyme Bay Winery in Musbury, Devon without the aid of artificial flavours or colours. Real fruit extracts are blended with a sweet apple cider base to make their original creations. Crushed Mixed Berries comes in a clear bottle with vintage style label, showing off the striking reddish/purple liquid inside. The aroma is mainly fruit with an undertone of apples which is true of the taste too. There are cart loads of berries in this cider, including the seasonal elderberry. Drinking this reminds you of picking fresh raspberries and blackberries from the hedgerows. Quite sweet and almost squash like, the low 4 per cent ABV makes it very easy to drink. Try pairing it with a lightly spiced apple crumble. All Annings Ciders are vegan-friendly.



1845 (6.3%) – Fuller's
RRP £2.09 for 500ml (Morrisons)

Fuller's has been brewing for more than 160 years and 1845 was the year that the partnership papers of Fuller, Smith & Turner were officially signed. 1845 was first brewed in 1995 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the signing. The beer is bottle conditioned meaning that a small amount of yeast is left in the bottle to develop over time. It is then matured for 100 days prior to release producing the same fresh and complex flavours you would find in cask ale. 1845 pours a ruby reddish brown with the distinct aroma of burnt toffee, fresh fruitcake and spices. It tastes like marmalade on toast with soft, sticky oranges at first finishing on a toffee and toast note. Pair with vegan sausages, butternut squash fries and beans or a vegan sausage stew with squash and red peppers.

Fuller's bottled products are filtered and suitable for vegetarians and vegans. The only exception being their Organic Honey Dew.



AOC Cabardes Chateau de Brau (13%) – Domaine de Brau RRP £8.75 for 75cl (Vintage Roots)

Domaine de Brau has been organic since 1989 with approximately 40 hectares of vineyards. Ideally situated in Languedoc, southern France, the vines enjoy perfect growing conditions with bountiful sunshine and cooling sea breezes. This is a full-flavoured red displaying plenty of blackcurrant, damson and sweet, jammy fruits. There's enough spice to lift the fruity flavours and produce a warming sensation. Several grape varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache, Merlot, Syrah/Shiraz are used to create this beautiful wine. Each individual variety is separately vinified before the final blend is made. A superb accompaniment to hearty casseroles and stews such as a Moroccan butternut squash, chickpea and lentil stew.

All wines on vintageroots.co.uk are clearly labeled with a VG symbol when suitable for vegans.



Nut Brown Ale (5%) – Samuel Smiths Brewery
RRP £2.59 for 550ml (Various online stockists)

Yorkshire's oldest brewery ferments its beers in stone Yorkshire squares. These fermenting vessels made of solid slabs of slate give the beers a fuller bodied taste. The beers are brewed using all natural ingredients without any chemical additives, artificial sweeteners, colourings, flavourings or preservatives. Even the water used is drawn from a well 85 feet underground. Nut Brown Ale is regarded as the definitive example of this beer style. Pouring a copper colour with ruby highlights the nose is full of toffee and nuts. Hazelnuts and walnuts come forward in the taste with a slight fruitiness. The mouthfeel is creamy with a dry, biscuity finish. It's so full of nut flavours you'll need to hide it from nearby squirrels! Nut Brown Ale will pair nicely with a tray of simple roasted squash and root vegetables or acorn squash stuffed with wild rice.

All Samuel Smith's beers and ciders are suitable for vegans (except cask conditioned Old Brewery Bitter and bottled Yorkshire Stingo).



Spiced Apple & Ginger Cordial – Belvoir Fruit Farms RRP £4.69 for 500ml (Various farm shops and garden centres)

Belvoir Fruit Farms produces a range of cordials, pressés and fruit crushes in the gorgeous Lincolnshire countryside. All natural ingredients including fresh flowers, fruits and spices are combined with local spring water. There are no preservatives, flavourings or anything artificial in their products. The Spiced Apple & Ginger Cordial contains apple juice and root ginger with a pinch of warming cinnamon and cardamon. It's perfectly balanced without any of the spices becoming too dominant. What stands out for this cordial is its versatility: it can be mixed with still or sparkling water for a long, refreshing drink, or add hot water to make the base of a great hot toddy. The label also suggests adding a splash to apple pies!

The majority of Belvoir Fruit Farms products are vegan (except their Honey, Lemon & Ginger Cordial).

Follow Oliver Coningham on twitter: [@oconingham](https://twitter.com/oconingham)



TRUE GRIT

Pushing boundaries with plant power

Jenna Robinson is living proof of the power of plants. The elite athlete, who will be running in the obstacle course racing (OCR) world championships in Ohio this month, has been a vegan for three and a half years.

OCR is an extreme sport where participants wade through muddy pools and take on obstacles like crawling under barbed wire. It's fast becoming one of the most popular and inclusive events around, catering to both beginners and seasoned athletes. It's tough, and the best performers have to be at peak fitness.

"You can be very strong and not eat any meat," Jenna, who lives in Nottingham, says. "A lot of people don't realise that. I am just as muscular as anyone else and just as fit."

Jenna decided to embark on a vegan lifestyle after watching videos about factory farming.

She says: "The more I looked into it, the more I realised 'I can't do this anymore'. I don't like how animals are reared and slaughtered. Before, I had been blind to it, but the more I learned, the less I could ignore it."

It got to a point where I couldn't enjoy certain foods anymore knowing how they had been produced."

Jenna, who previously did a lot of kickboxing, had taken a break from fitness and found herself gaining weight. In order to get back into shape, she signed up for a famously difficult race, not realising how gruelling it was going to be.

"It's an event called Tough Guy," she says. "I knew it was a muddy obstacle course, but that's all I knew. I ended up getting hypothermia, and having to walk the last bit. But instead of feeling like I had failed, I said I would come back the next year to finish what I had started.

"I got back into fitness again, weightlifting and cross fit, as well as doing lots of smaller races in preparation for the next Tough Guy. I am one of those people who will keep trying. I am not a competitive person, but when I am standing on the starting line, I want to beat myself, I want to do the best I can."

When she returned to the race the following year, she qualified for the world championships, which required a top 25 finish. "I was so chuffed because it was the only race that had beaten me."

Jenna credits her diet with enhancing her performances. She doesn't take any kind of supplements or protein shakes. While many of the cross fit athletes she works out with eat meat-heavy paleo diets, and drink protein shakes, Jenna believes you can get all the nutrition you need from real food.

She says: "I don't put a lot of planning into my food, but I generally eat at certain times, before and after a workout, and I always take my own meals into work with me.

"I had already been vegan for a while when I did my first race, but I was not a particularly healthy one. I had not learnt how to eat fresh food, and I was eating a lot of bread and pasta all the time. I needed more variety.

"I don't feel like I deprive myself of anything, which makes veganism a good choice. I eat so much every day, but just good stuff."

"I think that's where people go wrong. Lots of people don't actually like the idea of eating animals, but it can be hard to make the transition, and to make the changes. I don't feel like I deprive myself of anything, which makes veganism a good choice. I eat so much every day, but just good stuff, I don't really eat a lot of processed food."

According to the racer, there are a few vegans in the OCR world. She says: "I found this out online. After races, there are food trucks and stalls, but most of them don't have vegan options – even just chips. It's generally burgers and other meat.

"Someone brought this up on one of the forums and a lot of others commented on it. As a vegan, you can often think you think you're alone, but you're not. I hope race directors saw that discussion and will



take it on board, because sometimes, especially after a race, you just want something like chips."

In the last year, Jenna has seen three of her friends give up meat, saying it feels 'really good' to inspire others. "I never put people down for their diet or lifestyle, but I am happy to provide advice," she says. "After all, I haven't always been vegan, it took something to change my mind.

"It's about education – I show people what I eat, and the workouts I can do fuelled by plant-based foods, and when people see it doesn't affect performance negatively, they think of trying it themselves."

Her best advice to those turning to veganism is to read labels, and that it's ok to make mistakes – don't get mad about it, just don't do it again. She claims reading labels can be quite an eye-opening experience in terms of learning what is in processed food.

She says: "It can be quite disgusting, you can't believe what's in there. That's why for most of my diet, I stick to food that doesn't have a label – fresh fruit and veg. I also like to eat tonnes of raw food because we cook a lot of the nutrition out of things.

"I love raw veg, and when my diet is really clean, I feel the benefits instantly. You know that feeling you get from eating a massive takeaway? I used to feel like that all the time, with everything I ate. It's about enjoying your food, and eating to refuel."

Jenna is looking forward to the world championships. "When it comes to it, I am just going to try my best, it's not about having to achieve a certain position.

"It's all fun to me, I don't ever want to get to the stage where I'm not enjoying it because I'm too busy worrying about where I rank. I am happy to be competing."

Millions

These tiny childhood favourites are a welcome addition to your vegan treat box. They are chewy spheres with a crunchy shell and come in a range of delicious flavours (including strawberry, raspberry, bubblegum and cola). You can buy them in a variety of sizes, from little bags to an enormous 1kg jar, and they are available in newsagents, some supermarkets or online.



Ritz crackers

Cheesy, salty and delicious, these little crackers deliver a big flavour. They taste great by themselves, or can be dunked in hummus, with dairy-free cheese spread, or even sandwiched together with peanut butter. They come in large boxes with lots of the crackers inside, and are widely available in supermarkets and independent retailers.

Jus-Rol pain au chocolat

It's so rare to find vegan pastry – most are chock full of butter. But these ones, which combine delicious dark chocolate with an almost vanilla-y sweet and soft casing fit the bill perfectly. They are best warm, just open the can, cut the dough on the perforations, and roll up with the chocolate inside. Less than quarter of an hour in the oven and you have tasty soft pain au chocolat with runny melty chocolate inside – perfect for a weekend brunch.



THE ACCIDENTAL VEGAN

Surprising snacks that are free from
any animal products

Every month we comb the ingredient lists of top treats and snack foods that aren't marked or advertised as vegan – then we share our best discoveries with you. You might be surprised by some of the products on offer...

Lotus smooth caramelised biscuit spread

This stuff is so addictive, it should come with a warning. A blitzed up version of the Lotus caramel biscuits you often get on the side of a cuppa, this spread is heavenly. Extremely sweet, it can be enjoyed as an alternative to chocolate spreads or peanut butter – smear on banana slices, toast, or just eat it straight out of the jar. For adventurous eaters who like to combine the sweet and salty, it works well dolloped on Ritz crackers.



Choc chip Hobnobs

Some time ago, plain chocolate Hobnobs were vegan – then McVities put milk in them. Now, there is a new option for those bored of their standard, chocolate free offering. And these biscuits are excellent – crumbly, oaty and with a good amount of rich chocolate chips. Perfect for dunking in a cuppa. Even better than that – these cookies are easy to find, stocked in loads of supermarkets, as well as smaller retailers. The days of struggling to find vegan biscuits are definitely coming to an end!



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SPIRALIZER

The twisted trend that keeps on growing

Spiralizing – which sees vegetables turned into long spiral-shaped noodles – offers an easy and delicious way to pack more nutrients into your diet.

You can spiralize your five a day using a machine to crank out perfect, slim pieces, which can then be used in place of pasta – a good way to reduce calories and carbs in a dish – or to liven up salads, or even in some desserts. The noodles are a good option for those with celiacs disease, or anyone avoiding wheat or gluten. In addition, it's much quicker to cook veggies than pasta, with just a quick 20 second dunk in boiling water required – though some people prefer to eat them raw.

According to some major food retailers, sales of courgettes are up by almost 20 per cent on last year, and foodies are putting the increase down to the influence of a growing number of trendy bloggers, who are putting spiralizers in the spotlight.

And the trend shows no sign of abating, with other veg that are popular for turning into noodles also seeing a spike in sales – including carrot.

How should I get started?

There are a variety of different machines on the market. The easiest way to give spiralizing a go is to use a handheld julienne peeler, to create thin, spaghetti like strands of veg. This is the cheapest option, so good for a beginner. The downside is that you won't have the length or uniformity that you get with a machine.

Some food processors come with attachments to create ribbons, which is a quick and easy method.

You can also buy specialised spiralizing machines, from basic handheld to countertop horizontal or upright machines.

Handheld machines can be fairly labour intensive, and more time consuming. With the counter top varieties, you can create perfect, uniform spirals

What fruit and vegetables work best?

Courgettes, carrots, sweet potatoes, and apples are all delicious. Most root vegetables are perfect for it, and some people enjoy cucumbers for salads, as well as beetroots, pears and celeriac.

Ok, then what?

You can either cook the spirals, or eat them raw. There are all sorts of recipes, including sweet desserts as well as the more common pasta-style dishes, and the specially prepared produce can be used in meals at any time of day, including waffles for breakfast and in soups or even trifle (see overleaf).

Tips to create the perfect spirals

While spiralizers are versatile, there are qualities that make some fruit and veg more suitable than others.

- Straight veg are much easier to feed into the machine than curved
- Not too long. There are two reasons for this, firstly, it will be impractical to feed an item that's too long through the machine, and secondly, your spirals will become unwieldy. Chop extra lengthy veg into manageable sections.
- You also want to make sure they aren't too short – anything less than about 8cm will be a struggle.
- Firm. Anything too soft or overripe will become mushy.
- Seedless, as little parts can get stuck in the blades.
- Nothing any wider than about 10cm – you will struggle to turn the machine handle. Equally anything too narrow (less than about 4cm) means you won't be able to crank out long noodle shapes.

Sweet Potato Waffles with Maple Syrup Serves 1

- 1 sweet potato, peeled
 - 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 - Coconut oil, warmed to a liquid, to grease
 - 1 banana, sliced, to serve
 - Coconut yoghurt, to serve
 - Maple syrup, to serve
1. Though high in natural sugars, maple syrup is packed with manganese, zinc and calcium, so is a great way to succumb to your sweet tooth while also nourishing your body. Here, it is drizzled over a crispy, cinnamon-scented waffle formed from sweet potato noodles. If you don't own a waffle iron or electric waffle maker, you could still achieve great results by forming the waffle with your hands and frying until browned on both sides.
 2. Preheat your waffle iron on the stove top, or plug in your electric waffle maker to warm.
 3. Spiralize the sweet potato using blade 1 (fine). Transfer the noodles to a large bowl and sift over the cinnamon. Pour 500ml (2 cups) boiling water over the noodles and set aside for 5 minutes to soften and absorb the flavour of the cinnamon. Drain the noodles and use your hands to squeeze out as much water as possible.
 4. Brush the insides of the waffle maker with a thin coating of coconut oil and spread the noodles evenly over the surface. Close the lid and cook until crispy and golden on both sides.
 5. Transfer the waffle to a plate and serve with sliced banana, a dollop of coconut yoghurt and a drizzle of maple syrup.





Crunchy Salad with Sticky Mango Sauce Serves 1

- 1 mango, peeled and diced
- 250ml (1 cup) pineapple juice, freshly squeezed
- 1 pinch chilli flakes
- 1 tsp fresh root ginger, finely chopped
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- ½ celeriac (celery root), peeled
- ½ cucumber
- 2 tbsp mixed seeds
- 1 thick broccoli stem
- 1 handful coriander (cilantro), chopped

1. This salad has a fiery bite to it, which is great if, like me, you love spicy food. If you're chilli-phobic, manage the amount of spice to your own taste and, likewise, don't be afraid to load it up if you like it hot! The sauce makes enough for two or three salads so it's perfect for keeping in the fridge and will last for up to 4 days.
2. Place the mango, pineapple juice, chilli flakes, ginger and sesame oil in a blender and blend until smooth. Set aside.
3. Spiralize the celeriac (celery root) and cucumber using blade 2 (medium), then transfer to a serving bowl. Pour the mango sauce over the noodles.
4. Spiralize the broccoli stem using blade 1 (fine)
5. Scatter the seeds over the salad and top with the broccoli spirals and the chopped coriander (cilantro).

Recipe from *Spiralize!* by Stephanie Jeffs, published by Pavilion books. Photography by Tony Briscoe.

Recipes and images
from pages 38-40
of *Spiralize!* by
Stephanie Jeffs,
published by *Pavilion*
books. Photography
by *Tony Briscoe*.



Fruit Noodle Trifle Serves 1

- 1 tsp chia seeds
- 225ml (1 cup) mango or apple juice
- 60g (½ cup) cashew nuts
- 1 tbsp agave or maple syrup
- 2 tbsp coconut oil, warmed
- ½ kiwi, peeled and sliced
- 1 sweet red apple, halved
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ mango, peeled and stone removed
- 1 firm persimmon
- 1 handful mixed berries (I used raspberries, blackberries, blueberries and strawberries)

For the topping:

- 1 handful goji berries
- 1 tsp cacao

1. Place the chia seeds in the bottom of a glass and cover with the mango or apple juice. Transfer to the fridge and leave for at least 2 hours, preferably overnight, for the seeds to bloat.
2. Place the cashew nuts and the goji berries for the topping in separate bowls, cover both with water and set aside for at least 2 hours, then drain.
3. Place the cashew nuts in a blender with the coconut oil and agave or maple syrup. Blend until smooth and creamy, then set aside.
4. Using a sharp knife, cut one of the apple halves into thin slices and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice to prevent them from browning.
5. Place the mango in a blender and blend until smooth, set aside.
6. Spiralize the remaining half apple using blade 1 (fine), then trim the noodles into 10cm (4inches) lengths with a pair of scissors. Toss the noodles in the remaining lemon juice and set aside.
7. Spiralize the persimmon using blade 2 (medium) then set aside.
8. When ready to assemble the trifle, remove the glass containing the chia seeds from the fridge. Add a layer of berries to the bottom of glass, pushing them down into the seeds. Now build the trifle by alternating layers of the noodles, blended mango and sliced apple and kiwi, adding a few goji berries between each layer.
9. Stop layering once the glass is almost full and spoon a layer of the cashew custard over the fruit. Sprinkle with a few of the goji berries and sift over the cacao. Serve.

TOP TIPS

- You can make this dish your own by experimenting with different types of fruit and making the most of what's in season and abundant.
- The cashew custard is a great imitation of the real thing, plus it is packed with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, so I would really recommend giving it a try; though a topping of yoghurt would also be healthy and delicious.

FOLLOWING THE SNAIL TRAIL

Groundbreaking Cinnamon Snail chef Adam Sobel talks about the road to success



The Cinnamon Snail is widely considered to be one of the best food trucks in America, winning media plaudits and prizes, and gaining legions of fans who'll queue around the block to sample chef Adam Sobel's delicious vegan food.

The truck, named after its trademark snail shaped cinnamon buns, tours New York City, with patrons having to find its location – which changes daily – by tracking the team's social media.

After several years on the road, Adam has finally released a cookbook called *Street Vegan*, which he describes as 'full of yummy things, wacky stories about our adventures on the streets on NYC, and loads of mouthwatering pictures' (turn over for some delicious recipes). He talks to *Vegan Life* about his lifestyle, success, and plans for the future.

"Before I myself became vegan, I fell in love with Joey, my wonderful talented and adorable wife," Adam says. "She was the first vegan person I had ever gotten really close with, and I admired the ethics behind her lifestyle. I started learning to cook so that I could make really yummy nourishing food for her. Working in restaurants, people would come in and ask for menu items modified to vegetarian or vegan, and I kept finding myself sticking up for them, as the other cooks made fun of them. Finally, one of the cooks asked me 'If you believe in this so much, why aren't YOU vegetarian?'"

"And he had a good point. I decided at that point to start living more in alignment with my principals. About a year later, my wife and I had our first daughter Idil, who now works with me on our food truck sometimes.

"During Joey's long labor at home (we had a homebirth) I had a realization about nursing. It's such an important physical and emotional connection between a mother and her child. I felt like I would never want to stand in the way of that relationship for any other living being again. The day my daughter was born, I became vegan, and in one day, I experienced two of the best things that ever happened to me in my life."

After working in vegan restaurants for several years serving mostly veggie clientele, Adam started to feel he was 'preaching to the choir'. In order to bring the food to a wider audience, he had to literally take to the streets.

He says: "I wanted people who really didn't care about veganism (yet) to see the huge display case of vegan donuts, and a line down the block, and check it out.

"I really made our menu as attractive to non-veg eaters as possible, and have tried to break down some of the misconceptions people have about this type of cuisine. I don't know whether non-vegans are surprised by how good the food is. We have been really lucky to get a lot of media coverage, and amazing reviews, and awards, so honestly, what's harder is living up to the extreme hype new eaters have seen about us before we serve them. I think most of the time non-vegans get their minds blown. I hope that's the case at least!"

It's not only the animals who reap the benefits of the business' ethos. The homeless and poor are invited to talk to staff, who will offer them something to eat.

"It's pretty simple really," says Adam. "If someone is poor and in need of a meal, and I have a truck full of yummy nourishing food right in front of them, what kind of monster would I be to not give them something good to eat?"

The chef is somewhat surprised by the massive success of Cinnamon Snail, but admits he would never have set out to do this if he didn't think he would pull it off.

"I never really thought we would help develop quite as much recognition for veganism as we have been able to," he explains.

"I knew people would love the food, because I am confident in my ability to make good food, but I never imagined the lines which would sometimes be over 100 people deep. That was just pretty crazy."

And now there are exciting plans for another, more permanent outlet for his delicious offerings. Adam says: "I can't say too much about it at this point, but we have an awesome opportunity that is coming together for an NYC brick and mortar location, which is slated to open before the end of 2015."





New England-Style Chickpea ‘Crab’ Cakes with Lemon Dijon Tartar Sauce

Serves 5

For the tartar sauce

- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 5 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 small sour pickle, chopped
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp mirin
- 1 tbsp umeboshi plum vinegar
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp agave nectar
- 115g (4oz) soft tofu
- 1 minced spring onion (scallion), green and white parts, plus more for garnish
- 1 tbsp grated lemon zest

For the cakes

- ¼ tsp dried hijiki
- 2 tbsp dried wakame
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- 220g (1½ cups) cooked chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 3 tbsp white miso paste
- 5g (¼ cup) chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, plus more for garnish
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh dill
- 1 tbsp grated lemon zest, plus more for garnish
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 75g (¾ cup) all-purpose flour
- 80ml (⅓ cup) canola oil
- 240ml (1 cup) unsweetened soy milk
- 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 180g (2 cups) panko bread crumbs
- 25g (1¼ cups) coarsely chopped frisée, mustard greens, or rocket (arugula), for serving

1. Make the tartar sauce: melt the coconut oil in a sauté pan set over medium heat. Sauté the garlic, pickle, thyme, and oregano in the hot oil for about 3 minutes, until the garlic turns golden. Turn off the heat and stir in the lemon juice, mirin, plum vinegar, mustard, and agave nectar. Scrape the contents of the pan into a blender. Crumble the tofu into the blender and blend at high speed for 40 seconds, until a mostly smooth puree is formed. Pulse in the spring onion and lemon zest until just combined. Chill for at least 1 hour, or up to 3 days in an airtight container.
2. Make the cakes: place the hijiki and wakame in a small bowl and pour 500 ml (2 cups) hot water over them. Allow the sea vegetables to rehydrate for 15 to 20 minutes.
3. Heat the olive oil in a sauté pan set over medium heat. Sauté the shallots, garlic, and celery for 4 to 5 minutes, until the shallots start to soften. Drain and rinse the sea vegetables and add them to the sauté pan. Transfer the contents of the pan, along with the chickpeas, miso, parsley, dill, lemon zest, pepper, and flour, to a food processor. Process for about 30 seconds, to evenly distribute all ingredients, but leaving the mixture chunky. Divide the contents of the food processor into 20 round fritters, about ½ inch thick, smoothing the outside with wet hands.
4. Fry the cakes: heat the canola oil in a frying pan set over medium-high heat. In a small bowl, combine the soy milk and mustard, which will cause the milk to curdle and thicken; place the bread crumbs in a separate bowl. Dip each chickpea cake in the curdled soy milk, then in the bread crumbs, and then slip each cake into the hot oil.
5. Working in batches, fry the cakes for about 2 minutes on each side, until each is heated through and has an even golden crust. Drain the fried cakes on a paper-towel-lined plate. Serve immediately, or reheat anytime within 24 hours.
6. On each plate, place some mixed greens, 4 hot chickpea cakes, and a ramekin with 3 or 4 tablespoons of the tartar sauce. Garnish with lemon zest, spring onion, and parsley.



Recipe from *Street Vegan* by Adam Sobel. Photography by
Kate Lewis. Published by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, an
imprint of Penguin Random House, LLC.



Recipe from *Street
Vegan* by Adam Sobel.
Photography by Kate Lewis.
Published by Clarkson
Potter/Publishers, an
imprint of Penguin Random
House, LLC.



Chocolate Ganache-Stuffed S'Mores Donuts

For the chocolate ganache

- 240ml (1 cup) coconut milk
- 3 tbsp brown rice syrup
- 350g (2 cups) vegan chocolate chips

For the donuts

- 480ml (2 cups) unsweetened soy milk
- 120ml (½ cup) canola oil, plus more for frying the donuts
- 4½ tsp active dry yeast
- 120ml (½ cup) evaporated cane juice
- 450g (4½ cups) all-purpose flour, plus extra for the work surface
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- Canola oil, for frying

For the topping

- 150g (1½ cups) mini vegan marshmallows (or chopped vegan marshmallows)
- 80g (1 cup) smashed vegan graham crackers
- 90g (½ cup) ground vegan dark chocolate chips (optional)

For the chocolate glaze

- 75g (¾ cup) sifted Dutch-process cocoa powder
- 750g (6 cups) vegan powdered sugar
- 180ml (¾ cup) unsweetened soy milk

For the vanilla glaze

- 180ml (¾ cup) unsweetened soy milk
- 1¼ tsp pure vanilla extract, or ½ tsp vanilla beans
- 750g (6 cups) vegan powdered sugar



1. Make the ganache: In a large saucepan set over medium heat, bring the coconut milk and brown rice syrup almost to a boil. Place the chocolate chips in a heat-proof bowl. When the milk starts bubbling and rising, pour it on top of the chocolate chips, and vigorously whisk together until the chips have completely broken down and the mixture is totally smooth. Chill the ganache for at least 3 hours. Use immediately, or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 10 days.
2. Prepare the donuts: In a large pot over low heat, warm the soy milk and canola oil to 35°C (95°F). Pour the warmed soy milk and oil into a large bowl. Sprinkle on the yeast, and sprinkle the evaporated cane juice on top of the yeast. Allow the yeast to activate for 5 minutes, until it foams up. Add the flour and knead together on a floured work surface for about 90 seconds to form a smooth dough. Place the dough in a medium bowl and allow it to rest, covered, for 1 hour, until the dough has just about doubled in size. (If the room temperature is cool, allow for slightly more time.)
3. Transfer the dough onto a floured work surface, and for 3 minutes, knead in the salt, baking powder, and baking soda.
4. Roll out the donuts: Lightly dust a baking sheet with flour. On a lightly floured work surface, roll the dough into a ½-inch thickness. Cut with a 3-inch biscuit cutter and transfer the circles of dough onto the floured baking sheet. Reroll any scraps to form more donuts. Place the donuts in a proofer for 25 minutes (or proof in your oven).
5. Make the chocolate glaze: In the small bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat together the cocoa powder, powdered sugar, and soy milk.
6. Make the vanilla glaze: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, combine the soy milk, vanilla, and powdered sugar and whisk until smooth. Use immediately, or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks. Before using, gently warm in a double boiler to just above room temperature.
7. Fry the donuts: Fill a deep fryer or deep-sided frying pan with 2 to 3 inches of canola oil and heat the oil to 180°C (360°F). Working in batches to avoid crowding, fry the proofed donuts for 2½ to 3 minutes on each side. Check the first donut with a knife to ensure that the centre has cooked through perfectly. Transfer the finished donuts to a cooling rack to dry and cool.
8. Fill the donuts: Once all the donuts are fried, using both thumbs, pinch out and widen a crater in the centre of each donut on one side. Glaze the top side (the side with the cavity) of each donut with chocolate glaze. Stuff the centre of each donut with 2 tablespoons of the ganache. While the glaze is still wet, place 5 or 6 marshmallows atop each donut and sprinkle with crushed grahams. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of the vanilla glaze and sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the ground chocolate chips, if using, onto each donut. For ultimate-maximum-incredible-campfire bonus points, do what we do, and lightly toast the marshmallows on top with a butane torch.



VEGAN ESSENTIALS

A love of ethical food inspired a former city worker to open a new business

For many people, owning their own food-based business is little more than a pipedream. But Vanessa Almeida's talent in the kitchen, and dedication to animal rights has led her to a career inventing, cooking, and selling her own delicious vegan creations.

Vanessa, who is originally from Brazil, and now lives in Hackney with her husband Neni, is planning to open a vegan coffee shop and café. In the meantime, she has become a well-known face at various markets and pop ups with her stall, most recently at Pump Shoreditch.

She has also written a book – *Essential Vegan* – which has been shortlisted in the Vegfest 2015 awards.

Vanessa says: "I have been vegan for about four years. I was pescatarian then vegetarian for about 15 years before that, then it got to the point where it didn't make any sense not to be vegan, from a compassion point of view. I don't know why I didn't do it sooner, to be honest.

"At least 40 per cent of the people who eat my food are not vegan. They say they want to try vegan food, and they do enjoy it."

"It was a process for me, watching videos, reading books and finding out more about the meat and dairy industries. Then I started removing certain products from my diet – that took about six months, moving through milk, yoghurt and eggs. The last thing was cheese. I thought cheese would be a problem, but I have never had a craving.

"My husband is also vegan – we did it at the same time. I remember watching videos during my lunch break at my previous job. I was researching animal videos, which I then showed to my husband.

"After watching them he said, 'that's it, we should do it'. It definitely helps that we are both vegan. For both of us, it was a decision motivated by animal rights. There was never any doubt about the our choice."

It has been a huge change in direction for Vanessa who used to work as a compliance officer at a training company in the city. "I see those people now," she explains, "and I used to be one of them.

"So angry and stressed – always in a rush. I'm very happy to have moved away from that lifestyle."

Her current work means she is constantly interacting with the public, getting feedback on her recipes.

She says: "The reaction has been incredible. At least 40 per cent of the people who eat my food are not vegan. Maybe they like the

presentation, or are tempted in by the huge photo of our homemade burger. They say they want to try vegan food, and they do enjoy it."

Vanessa's collection of recipes came about when she started veganising all the savoury dishes she used to like eating, along with desserts and cakes.

"My friends – including the meat-eaters – started asking me for my recipes," she says. "Then one of them said I should start a blog, which I did in 2012. At first it was just horrible – taking pictures of the food on my phone. But it started to get popular.

"Around that time, I went to Brazil, and a friend there asked me to host a cookery class. I had so many recipes by this point, that my husband suggested writing a cookery book. It was in Portuguese at first, then later I did an English version, which took about a year. The book came out at the end of 2013, so then I started promoting it and going to events".

At this point, the vegan cooking and book was taking over, with Vanessa looking forward to the weekends, when she'd be working to promote the brand. She knew it would eventually become her full-time career, so it was a case of deciding when it was viable to quit her job. And now it's going better than ever.

She says: "My book – *Essential Vegan* – has been nominated for a Vegfest award – I was so happy when I found out, as a lot of thought went into it. I wanted to create recipes that are easy to follow, with ingredients you can get anywhere. My plan was to write a compact book that you could plan a whole three-course meal from easily.

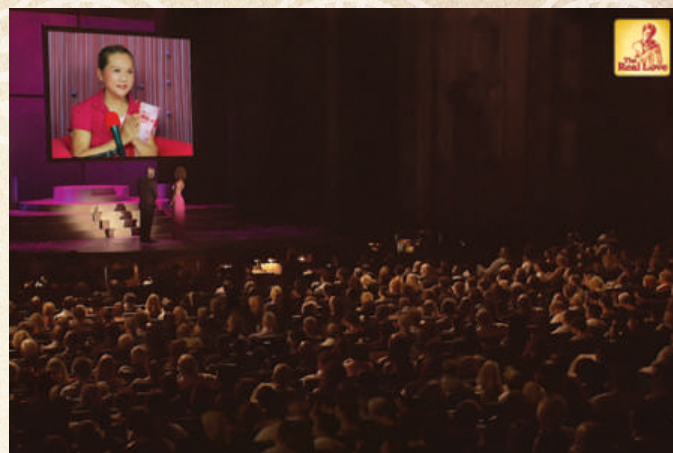
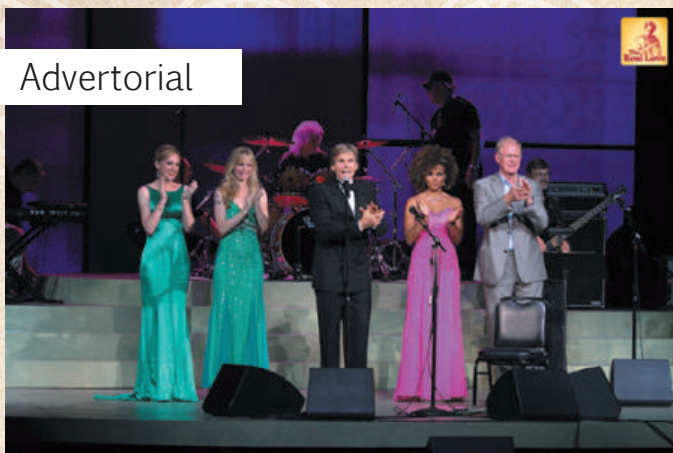
"At the same time I was working on the book, I was doing a course on vegan nutrition, and that definitely informed the savoury recipes, which are very healthy. The desserts are more indulgent. But the whole ethos was to be vegan and healthy. I have plans for another book, designed for children."

For now, she will continue taking her stall to pop-up venues, but she has a clear picture of the direction she wants the business to go in.

"When I open my coffee shop, I want to hold cookery classes for families and groups, so children can work together with older people to create meals," Vanessa explains. "I want to be involved in the community, and build a real community space, where people come together. I want somewhere people know they can come and spend all day, and children can come and learn. This idea comes from my culture in Brazil, families come together to eat, and to eat well. I believe it all starts at home."

Vanessa Almeida's book *Essential Vegan* is available from Vegan X shop in Kings Cross and a few branches of Whole Foods. If you buy it from her website essentialvegan.co.uk, £2 from every sale will go to Animal Equality, which campaigns for animal rights.

Advertorial



*Can any one see any thing
more beautiful than you!*

Excerpt from "Moon of Mine"
Poem by Supreme Master Ching Hai



Praise for Supreme Master Ching Hai's work

"Thank you for all your inspiration, Master Ching Hai. Since watching Supreme Master Television, I have stopped eating meat completely and changed my diet to a vegan one. It has made me much healthier, and I feel much better as well.

"Also, I now give most of my money towards animal and humanitarian aid. I have gone through many trials in life, but this wondrous person, Master Ching Hai, has made me believe that there is more to life than just sitting around and waiting for someone else to do something. What she has done is amazing, and it is up to us to save our gracious planet.

May God bless you and Heaven smile upon you all!" - Joseph-Sean from Darwen, United Kingdom

REAL LOVE OF PEACE AND VEGANISM

The name 'Supreme Master' refers to the divine spirit within all beings – and so it is the perfect title for a spiritual leader who wants to spread a message about the importance of veganism.

Supreme Master Ching Hai is a world-renowned spiritual leader, humanitarian, bestselling author, poet, and artist. She lovingly conveys her vision - of caring, friendship, and compassion - among all countries and co-inhabitants of the earth.

She donates the proceeds from her creative works to many charitable projects around the world to help humans in need and protect our vulnerable animal friends, unconditionally devoting her time, finances and energy to remind us of our inner goodness and reverence for all of God's creations.

An Inspiring Journey of Spiritual Discovery

The journey the Supreme Master encourages is to find peace and real love within us all, the love for each other, both humans and animals, and so together we will make our world a better place, and to find a lasting world peace.

One of the best ways to do this is through veganism – and Supreme Master has created tools and inspired others to help this transition – delicious food through Loving Hut restaurants, inspiration through works of art like musicals, and a selection of vegan cookery programs which are available to view online.

According to Supreme Master Ching Hai: "Whatever we can share, begin with sharing, and then we will feel a subtle change in ourselves, more love will be pouring into our consciousness, and we will be aware of something, and that is the beginning.

"We are here to learn, to learn to grow as well as to learn to use our power, our limitless power of love and creativity, in order to make a better world wherever we happen to be."

Award Winning Broadway Musicals

The Supreme Master's dedication to the goal of peace has inspired the making of a musical called *The Real Love*. It is based on Supreme Master Ching Hai's personal life experiences. It tells the love story of Thanh, a Vietnamese woman who helps war-torn refugees, her falling in love, and her journey through the Himalayan Mountains in search of spiritual understanding. With composers including Oscar-winning Bill Conti (most famous for composing the Rocky soundtrack) the show has been praised by critics, with Pasadena Weekly claiming: "Supreme Master TV has made an impact on the Hollywood scene."

The producers have assembled an expert team of artists with a clutch of Grammy awards, Oscars and Emmys between them. Their subsequent musical – *Loving the Silent Tears* – was described as 'An unprecedented musical experience', by Broadway World. A DVD of the spectacular show is available to view.

The song lyrics of *The Real Love* are poetry written by the Supreme Master, set to music by five distinguished composers from the world of film and theatre.

According to Oscar-winning actress Shirley Jones: "It is such an incredible musical. It was in such a short time, but I have to tell you, we had the best possible people. It was poetry set to music, and when I heard it I realised it was something very special. It was gorgeous. I was overwhelmed by it."

Olivier Award-winning director Richard Maltby Jr added: "In a very real sense, this musical is a continuation of the spiritual message the Supreme Master spreads to the world. Events in her own life take on a spiritual journey we can all relate to – one that leads us deeper and deeper into the mysteries and wonders of the human heart and the human soul."

Both Musicals [the *Real Love* and *Loving the Silent Tears*] are free for all to watch online and download here:

The Real Love Musical edenrules.com/real-love

Loving The Silent Tears Musical edenrules.com/loving-silent-tears

Who is Supreme Master Ching Hai?

She was born in Central Au Lac. During her early years, she was often found helping hospital patients and the needy in whichever way she could. As a young adult, she moved to Europe to study and continued there as a voluntary nurse and translator for the Red Cross.

She soon discovered that pain and suffering exist in all cultures and in all quarters of the globe. Searching for a remedy to this became the foremost goal in her life. She was happily married at the time to a German doctor and although it was an extremely difficult decision for both of them her husband agreed to the separation.

She then embarked on what became a two year journey in search for spiritual understanding. Finally in the deepest reaches of the Himalayas in India, she found an enlightened Master who imparted to her the Quan Yin Method - a meditation technique which contemplates on the Inner Light and Sound. After a period of practice, she became fully enlightened.

And she uses the enlightenment to spread the vegan message, seeing it as a noble way of living.

Loving Hut the Worldwide Vegan Food Chain

Vegan restaurants named Loving Hut have been opened worldwide by members of the association and have been inspired by the vision of Supreme Master Ching Hai. Loving Hut outlets, which are owned and run by association members support the Supreme Master's vision, by providing food that is delicious as well as vegan. The businesses are not owned by Supreme Master and she does not earn any commission from them.

In the words of Supreme Master Ching Hai: "I have a dream. I dream that all the world will become peaceful. I dream that all the killing will stop. I dream that all the children will walk in peace and harmony. I dream that all the nations shake hands with each other, protect each other and help each other.

"I dream that our beautiful planet will not be destroyed. It takes billion, billion, trillions of years to produce this planet and it's so beautiful, so wonderful. I dream that it will continue, but in peace, beauty and love".



MEET THE CHEF

Mira Manek

Coming from a large family where my cousins and I grew up together as siblings, living with our grandparents and parents, food has always been an integral part of our lives – what brings the family together.

But when you're served hot rotis and delicious curries and daals from the very beginning, this is the norm – not something you think is different or unique. It was only living abroad and travelling extensively in India that made me realise just how authentic my own home-cooked food was, and is. And so, starting with my family's trousseau of recipes – well, recipes that weren't written, but somewhat intuitive – I started to learn, understand and experiment using the ingredients and spices in my home kitchen. And I realised that something I had always thought was oily and therefore I couldn't eat was actually entirely nutritious and of course, delicious.

Going vegan is becoming more mainstream and it's great to see more and more people adopting a plant-based diet. People are more interested in educating themselves on how the food that they put into their bodies not only affects their weight, but their energy, skin, even thoughts. It is alarming how little we really know about the food industry and the effects that artificial hormones often injected into animals can have on our health. The new vegan restaurants in London are so creative and make everything so incredibly tasty that they're creating quite a movement – and this isn't just the case in London. I'm sure we'll be seeing more and more vegan restaurants and lots of delicious vegan options in other restaurants.

I love experimenting with vegan options such as my chai chia pudding, which contains a deliciously creamy homemade cashew and date milk. Nuts can be rather heavy, though, and for some, they're not easy to digest in large quantities, so seeds are also great. My cinnamon granola, which I supply to the Holborn Dining Rooms, is made with pumpkin seeds rather than nuts. I also use a lot of coconut oil in all my dishes, whether I'm making a daal, popcorn or my coco fudge.

I'm all about changing the concept of Indian food to being super healthy and taking it back to its essence and roots, and I also want to endlessly experiment with spices and spice mixtures, retaining and enhancing flavours while making food entirely nourishing and guilt-free. So it's the amalgamation of healthy Indian and Indian-inspired, of using spices in novel ways and reinventing curries, and lastly of making Indian flavours accessible, easy and approachable.

I've recently discovered the creative things you can do with a cauliflower and there are just endless options. In this recipe, I've used the very traditional flavours and spices with which my grandmother makes her stir-fried rice and have swapped the rice for shredded or grated cauliflower. And it tastes absolutely delicious – full of flavour and none of the carbs.

All my products and collaborations have come about organically, meeting and working with the talented chefs at Holborn Dining Rooms who wanted to experiment and introduce new flavours, dishes, and specials on the menu. My zesty saffron compote served with yoghurt and cinnamon granola is one of my newest dishes currently on the breakfast menu. Raw Press in Mayfair also had my Indian summers salad on their menu, a mix of kale, cabbage, strawberries, dates and almonds, tossed in a rich coriander and cashew dressing. And I'm just about to launch my chai spice mix, which you'll be able to find at Department of Coffee stores and in hotels soon.

Check out Mira's signature dish on the next page.

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MIRA MANEK'S SIGNATURE DISH

Using cauliflower rice makes for a light lunch

Colourful Cauliflower with Vegetables and Spices *Serves 2*

- 1 cauliflower
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 10-15 curry leaves
- 1 tbsp ginger garlic and chilli paste (optional)
- 1 carrot
- ½ bowl frozen peas
- ½ red pepper
- ½ green pepper
- Handful spinach
- 1 tomato
- 2 spring onions
- 1 tsp salt

1. Start by grating the cauliflower (you can also use a food processor) and chopping the vegetables ready for the stir-fry.
2. Now heat the coconut oil, cumin and mustard seeds in the pan.
3. Once the cumin seeds are brown and the mustard seeds start to pop, you can add the curry leaves and ginger garlic and chilli paste (if you don't have a paste, just grate fresh ginger).
4. Now add the turmeric and then the carrots and peas, as these will take longer to cook.
5. Stir on low heat for a few minutes and then add the grated cauliflower. Keep stirring for another few minutes.
6. Now you can add the rest of the ingredients, leaving a handful of spring onions for garnishing.
7. This should be cooked and ready within 5 minutes – be careful not to overcook. Garnish with spring onions and serve.





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One serving (1–2 teaspoons) is equal to a handful of fresh berries = **One of your 5 a day!** We've used over **700g** of fresh berries in one 70g tube.

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CRACKING THE COCONUT

Coconut oil is everywhere right now. Fans claim it can help you lose weight and cure a number of illnesses – including Alzheimer’s disease. But does it live up to the hype?

Despite a whopping 86.5 per cent saturated fat content, coconut oil has seen a huge surge in popularity recently, filling the shelves of health food shops and supermarkets nationwide.

The coconut oil of today is a long way from the most unhealthy trans fat-containing hydrogenated oil used in junk food in the ‘80s - but its saturated fat content is still a concern.

Most vegetable oils (soya, olive, sunflower and rapeseed) contain less than 20 per cent saturated fat. Butter contains over 50 per cent – far less than coconut oil. So just why is it so popular?

Coconut: The stats

Like all plant foods, coconut is cholesterol-free. Although it is a fruit, coconut flesh has a very different nutritional content to other fruits. A third of the flesh is composed of fat and nearly 90 per cent of that is saturated – the worst type as it increases cholesterol, which increases the risk of heart disease. Desiccated coconut (coconut flesh that has been flaked and dried) contains around two-thirds fat.

A similar amount is found in hazelnuts, almonds and Brazil nuts but most of that is polyunsaturated fat that can lower the risk of heart disease if taken in moderation.

The fibre content in desiccated coconut is two to three times higher than in nuts. Some studies suggest that coconut flakes lower LDL 'bad' cholesterol because they are a good source of fibre which has cholesterol-lowering properties. Processing coconut to produce oil strips away this protective fibre.

However, fibre is easily obtained from other fruit, vegetables, wholegrain foods and pulses that don't contain so much fat. The recommended intake for fibre is 18g per day (this may soon rise to 30g). To increase your intake, choose high-fibre breakfast cereals (oats or muesli with no added sugar), switch from white bread, pasta and rice to wholegrain bread, pasta and brown rice and ensure you have at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

A 1980s study used to promote coconut oil described how Pacific islanders, who used coconut in every meal and so had a high intake of saturated fat, had lower than expected cholesterol, and heart disease was rare.

However, they had low intakes of salt, sugar and cholesterol and consumed a healthy amount of fibre, plants and omega-3 fats. They also had an active lifestyle and used little tobacco.

When the islanders moved to New Zealand and reduced their saturated fat intake, their intake of cholesterol, junk food, and sugar increased - and so did their risk of heart disease, proving that whole diet and lifestyle can have a profound effect on health.

But what's so bad about saturated fat?

All major health organisations agree that saturated fat is a risk factor for heart disease. Most saturated fat in the average UK diet comes from: fatty meat, poultry skin, sausages and pies, whole milk and full fat dairy products, lard, coconut oil, palm oil, pastry, cakes, biscuits, sweets and chocolate.

Saturated fat drives up cholesterol levels and too much cholesterol can lead to fatty deposits that clog the arteries and slow blood flow and can break apart to cause a heart attack or stroke.

A study in 2012 found reducing saturated (animal) fat, but not total fat, cut the risk of heart attack and stroke by 14 per cent.

Are all saturated fats equal?

The saturated fats, lauric, myristic and palmitic acid are found in meat, dairy products, eggs, palm and coconut oil, all raise cholesterol levels but not to the same extent:

- Myristic acid: found in palm kernel oil (not to be confused with palm oil), coconut oil, butter and other animal fats, is the most potent in terms of 'bad' cholesterol-raising.
- Palmitic acid: found in palm kernel oil, butter, cheese, milk and meat, it raises cholesterol less than myristic acid.
- Lauric acid: comprises about half the fat in coconut oil. Found in smaller amounts in human breast milk, cow's milk and goat's milk. Has around one-third less cholesterol-raising power than palmitic acid.

Medium and long-chain fats

One of the claims made for lauric acid from coconut oil is that it is metabolised (broken down and used) by the body differently to other saturated fats because it is made of medium-chain as opposed to long-chain fats.

A quick lesson in cholesterol

LDL 'bad' cholesterol can build up on the walls of the arteries and increase the risk of heart disease.

HDL 'good' cholesterol protects against heart disease by taking the 'bad' cholesterol out of the blood and preventing it from building up in the arteries.

Total cholesterol is a measure of LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol and other lipid (fat) components.

Most fats in animal products are long-chain saturated fats which are made into cholesterol or stored as body fat. Medium-chain fats are transported directly to the liver from where they supply energy directly to the heart, brain and muscles - well that's the theory anyway.

Studies on coconut oil and cholesterol have produced conflicting results. Some show medium-chain fats increase HDL 'good' cholesterol but others show they also increase LDL 'bad' and total cholesterol to the same extent as palm oil.

Yet other studies found no effect on HDL, LDL or total cholesterol. Medium-chain fats have also been found to increase plasma triglycerides (fats in the blood) in the same way long-chain fats do.

One possible explanation is that when the diet contains mostly medium-chain fats (when coconut oil is used in preference to unsaturated vegetable oils), some medium-chain fat may be diverted into the long-chain route leading to the production of cholesterol and fat deposits. This provides a compelling argument for not limiting your fat intake to just coconut oil.

Furthermore, medium-chain fats make up less than half of coconut fat, nearly a third is made up of the long-chain saturated myristic and palmitic acids (the major fats in red meat) which raise 'bad' cholesterol levels. The rest consists of small amounts of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. >

What's the smoke point?

Another selling point for coconut oil is the reputed high smoke point (that's when the fats in the oil break down or oxidise, creating harmful free radicals). However, many other oils have a higher smoke point. In fact, coconut oil has a relatively low smoke point compared to other commonly used cooking fats.



Sunflower Oil

Smoke point: 277 °C



Soya Oil

Smoke point: 238 °C



Rapeseed Oil

Smoke point: 204 °C



Olive Oil

Smoke point: 193°C



Coconut Oil

Smoke point: 177 °C



Flaxseed (linseed) Oil

Smoke point: 107°C

Criticism of coconut studies

Many of the health claims made for coconut oil are a mixture of anecdotal evidence, pseudoscience and poor reporting of a limited number of flawed studies (conducted over short periods of time with small numbers of participants).

The results are not yet significant enough to prove long-term benefits. Enthusiasts appear to have exaggerated the potential benefits beyond anything the science can confirm - whereas the research supporting the benefits of polyunsaturated plant oils is well-established.

So what about the claim that coconut oil may help treat or slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease (AD)?

This has yet to be confirmed - according to a recent review in the British Journal of Nutrition: "It must be emphasised that the use of coconut oil to treat or prevent AD is not supported by any peer-reviewed large cohort clinical data, any positive findings are based on small clinical trials and on anecdotal evidence. However, coconut remains a compound of interest requiring further investigation."

"It is better to eat a diet with a variety than to concentrate on individual foods as the key to good health."

Conclusion

Like most 'magic bullet' food and health stories, there may be some truth in the claims made for coconut oil - it's certainly healthier than butter and lard for example, but it's unlikely including additional coconut oil in your diet would be beneficial.

While medium-chain fats in coconut oil may raise HDL 'good' cholesterol, they can also raise LDL 'bad' and total cholesterol. But replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats (found in vegetable, olive, flaxseed and rapeseed oils, nuts and seeds), has been shown to increase HDL, lower LDL and improve overall cholesterol levels all at the same time.

According Walter Willett MD, chair of the department of nutrition at the Harvard school for public health: "We don't really know how coconut oil affects heart disease, and I don't think coconut oil is as healthful as vegetable oils like olive oil and soybean oil, which are mainly unsaturated fat and therefore both lower LDL and increase HDL."

As always it's the combination of a healthy diet and lifestyle that's most important in disease prevention. It is better to eat a diet with a variety than to concentrate on individual foods as the key to good health. Coconut oil's HDL-boosting effect may make it 'less bad' than its high-saturated fat cousins (butter and lard), but it is not the best choice of oils to reduce the risk of heart disease.

You are better off replacing saturated fats with healthier unsaturated vegetable oils such as olive oil and rapeseed oil for cooking and flaxseed oil for sauces and dressings.

Dr Justine Butler is a senior researcher and writer at Viva! She holds a PhD in molecular biology, BSc in biochemistry and diploma in nutrition. She has published an extensive list of reports, guides and fact sheets for Viva!Health and written many articles for health journals, regional and national press.



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Coconut butter alternative

What is it?

A spread you can use like butter – on toast, sandwiches, in baking and cooking.



Where can I buy it?

- Koko Dairy Free Spread is available from large Waitrose and health food stores from £1.95 for 500g. It contains palm oil which comes from sustainable sources. Made with pressed coconut oil it has less than half the saturates of butter and naturally contains medium chain fatty acids (MCFAs), including lauric. kokodairyfree.com
- Biona's organic cocomega spread also boasts sustainable palm oil, along with 21 per cent coconut oil content. Visit biona.co.uk.
- For something a bit different, but just as spreadable, Nutiva make a Coconut Manna paste, which can be used in place of margarine when you want a nutty flavour. A 445ml jar costs £7.49 from Ocado. For more stockists visit store.nutiva.com



Coconut milk

What is it?

An alternative to dairy milk, it works well in tea, coffee and baking.

Where can I buy it?

- Koko dairy is a versatile option for hot drinks – unlike soya, it doesn't curdle in coffee. This has a mild flavour. It retails in a 1ltr carton, usually priced around £1.39. kokodairyfree.com
- Alpro has added rice to its coconut milk, making it a sweet option. A 1ltr carton usually retails at £1.39. alpro.com.
- Ecomil produces a sugar-free, organic option. You can buy it from Planet Organic, where 1ltr costs £3.20.



BUYERS GUIDE

With so many nutritional benefits, it's no wonder companies are harnessing the power of the humble coconut in a whole range of inspired products. We pick out some of our favourites...

Coconut oil

What is it?

This oil usually comes as a solid block, sold in jars. It is reputed to be easily digestible and it can be used in the kitchen and as a cosmetic product, for hair, skin and nails.

Where can I buy it?

- Suma organic extra virgin coconut oil has a mild, pleasant flavour and many purposes. It can be used instead of butter as well as for roasting, baking and frying. To find out where it is available, visit suma.coop or call 01422 313845. Available in 320g (£3.09) and 650g (£5.49) jars.
- Coconoil sources its coconuts from Sri Lanka, for what it describes as an 'energy boosting' oil. The final product has not undergone any refining, bleaching or deodorising. With original and organic options, it retails in two sizes, 280g and 460g with prices starting at £4.94. coconoil.co.uk.
- Perfectly Pure's coconut oil has a slightly more pronounced, nutty flavour than the others. It has been touted for its moisturising properties by some users. You can buy it from Holland and Barrett, where a 453g jar costs £15.49.



Coconut water

What is it?

This tasty and refreshing beverage comes from the centre of green, young coconuts. Popular with sporty types because it contains easily digestible sugars and electrolytes, it is also naturally fat free.

Where can I buy it?

- Unoco sources its raw coconut water from the Philippines. The drink has less sugar and calories than pop and sports drinks, and contains more potassium than four bananas. It is available from Waitrose, Wholefoods and Eat among other retailers. Visit unocodrinks.com.
- Vitacoco was one of the first brands to hit the shop shelves, and is a favourite for many. It comes in three sizes - 1ltr, 500ml and 330ml, with 1ltr retailing for around £3.40. [Vitacoco.com](http://vitacoco.com).
- Innocent is well-known for its smoothies, but also makes a coconut water drink. The 1ltr carton sells for £3.69 in Waitrose. For other retailers check innocentdrinks.co.uk.

Coconut sugar

What is it?

This sweetener is produced from the sap of cut flower buds of the coconut palm. Popular in south and south east Asia, it has started to make an appearance in the UK. It has high levels of zinc and iron, compared to table sugars, and it is also full of antioxidants. It also contains a type of fibre called inulin, believed to help gut health.

Where can I buy it?

- Coconom produces an unrefined, unfiltered sugar with no added preservatives. There are various flavours available including original, ginger and turmeric with tamarind. A 250g bag is priced around £2.50. To find stockists, visit coconom.com.
- Buy Wholefoods Online offers its own coconut sugar, which has a pleasing butterscotch note to it. £2.47 for 250g. buywholefoodsonline.co.uk
- If you want to buy in bulk, Sussex Wholefoods sell 1kg of its own organic sugar. Its colour is similar to muscavado, and the flavour sweeter than white sugar. 1kg costs £8.99. healthysupplies.co.uk.



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SUPER EASY

This comforting curry combines a host of superfoods

Mushroom, Broccoli and Coconut Curry *Serves 4*

- 2 tbsp coconut oil
 - 1 tsp cumin seeds
 - 1 onion, chopped
 - 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
 - 3cm piece of fresh ginger, grated
 - 2 red chillies, finely chopped
 - 1 tsp ground turmeric
 - 1 tsp ground cumin
 - 1 tsp curry powder
 - 250g (2½ cups) button mushrooms, sliced
 - 1 head of broccoli, cut into florets
 - 4 large tomatoes, finely chopped
 - 1 x 400ml tin (1½ cups) coconut milk
 - 400ml (1¾ cups) water
 - 4 large handfuls of spinach
 - 2 large handfuls of kale, roughly torn and stems removed
 - Handful of fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped, to garnish
 - 50g (¼ cup) toasted almonds, roughly chopped, to garnish
 - Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
 - Brown rice or soba noodles, to serve
1. Melt the coconut oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat and add the cumin seeds. Fry until the seeds begin to pop and become fragrant, then quickly add the onion, garlic, ginger and red chillies and fry for 1–2 minutes.
 2. Add all the ground spices and cook for 5–7 minutes, or until the onion is translucent. Add the mushrooms, broccoli, tomatoes, coconut milk and 400ml water and cook for a further 10–15 minutes until the mushrooms are soft.
 3. Gently stir in the spinach and kale and allow to wilt.
 4. Serve over brown rice or soba noodles and garnish with the chopped coriander and toasted almonds.



Recipe and image from *Superfoods* by Julie Montagu.
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FURTHER VEDUCATION

Oliver Haslam reassures anxious vegans on their way to university

I've just finished my second year at uni, and it now feels like another home to me. Yet I can still vividly remember the preparations for my first year – which was also the first time I had ever lived away from home.

When thinking back, I remember running around various kitchen shops debating the necessity of a vegetable scrubber with my mum, along with trying to source an appropriately sized wok.

Among these stressful decisions, there was one particular concern that kept bothering me, how would I cope as a vegan at uni?

What if we all cook meals for each other? Will there be room in the fridge for my soya milk? Will it make my new flatmates feel awkward in the kitchen? And where can I buy tofu?

On reflection, these are all easily resolvable and somewhat irrational fears regarding vegan student life. But at the time these issues were seriously dwelling on my mind, and if you're currently contemplating heading off to university as a vegan, perhaps they're dwelling on yours too.

"Students eat anything and everything, and you are likely to see some of the strangest meals being prepared in your student kitchen."

I've been vegan my entire life, yet despite 20 years of experience under my belt, I was anxious. Now perhaps I'm just inept in the kitchen, but I imagine the thought of moving away from home and having to cook yourself dinner every night is a daunting prospect for any young person. As a vegan, this is potentially an even scarier thought. Yet two years later I'm still alive so I must have done something right.

Now let us rewind to November 2013. I've been at university for a month, I'm in my student kitchen, and I'm cooking.

"What on earth is that?" My flatmate asks as she stares with confusion into my saucepan of scrambled tofu. Yet I would ask similar questions upon walking into our kitchen to see another flatmate casually snacking on a bowl of raw broccoli mixed in with chocolate buttons.

Students eat anything and everything, and you are likely to see some of the strangest meals being prepared in your student kitchen in your first year at uni, and I don't mean strange as in exotic, I mean, well, strange. Whilst I sit and eat my weird scrambled tofu I sit opposite Joe, who is devouring a bowl of rice drenched in ketchup. As you can see, nobody is in a position to be judging your unusual vegan food.

"There are countless positives to being vegan at university. So just relax and embrace every aspect of your new university life."

It's a fun and interesting learning experience cooking with people your own age every night away from home. You learn from each other: I taught my flatmates about the wonder and flexibility of tofu. I learnt all about the health benefits of olive oil from my flatmate, Sara, whose mum is a nutritionist. We all collectively learnt of what happens when a rice cooker full of rice (not mine) is left unwashed and full of rice for two weeks. In case you were wondering, terrible, terrible things.

In fresher's week, among the fun and partying, I signed up to my university's Vegan Society, which has monthly gatherings where you can meet with other vegans to have discussions, share food and make friends.

I also spent some time preparing a list of simple vegan meals I could make to avoid Pot Noodles becoming my staple diet; stir-fry, chickpea curry and pasta sauces made fresh served me well. Or if you're feeling lazy then any supermarket sells all the Linda McCartney frozen food you could wish for.

At Christmas my flatmates decided to cook dinner for us all, which included a separate batch of vegan mashed potato and sausages. It was glorious, and I had to sit on the sofa for 30 minutes after to reflect on the ludicrous amount of food that I had just eaten.

This was one of the many moments I experienced during my first year where I realised how unnecessary my initial fears of veganism at university were.

There are countless positives to being vegan at university. So just relax and embrace every aspect of your new university life: the friendships, the food and the fun.

Leave the worrying for more pressing matters, like attempting an essay the night before its due whilst crippled with a hangover that could slay a walrus. Or the rice cooker on the kitchen work surface that hasn't been cleaned for two weeks and is growing forms of life that your innocent mind cannot yet comprehend.



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SUPER SQUASH

Make the most of autumn's butternut harvest

Butternut squash is a classic autumnal favourite. This versatile veg, which is in season between September and December, is delicious in soups, stews, risotti and curry. It can be roasted and even used in some cake recipes.

Butternut is the most popular of the squash family – which includes pumpkins – and is related to cucumbers, melons, marrows and courgettes. It has a hard skin, but the orange flesh inside has a delicious, slightly sweet flavour. It grows on a vine, and as it ripens, the flesh becomes more orange and sweet.

Butternut squash is technically a fruit – the general rule is that if an edible plant has seeds, it is a fruit – but it's usually treated as a vegetable.

Is it good for me?

In a word – yes. As well as being high in fibre, it is full of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants – including carotenoids, which are said to protect the body's cells from damaging free radicals.

It is also stuffed with lutein and zeaxanthin, which are for good for vision, protecting your eyes from UV and blue light radiation.

Butternut squash has high levels of vitamin C, as well as a range of B vitamins and some E and K, and a good amount of magnesium and potassium.

And, because of its rich flavour and lower calorie count than potatoes, some people like to use the starches interchangeably, with squash bringing a delicious flavour, texture, and colour to classic mash and other dishes.

How do I prepare it for cooking?

This depends on what you are planning to do with the inside. If you want to use it in a stew, soup or stir-fry, you will need to peel it first – which can be tough. You will also need to remove the stalk and seeds (some people enjoy eating the seeds lightly roasted).

The easiest way to get rid of the skin is to cut the top and bottom off with a sharp knife, then hold the squash upright and use a potato

peeler, going over some parts twice if necessary. Take the seeds and stringy membranes out from the middle, and chop as required in your recipe.

If you're planning to roast the squash, you can do so in sections with the skin on, which can be removed later as it softens when it cooks. A number of herbs and spices complement the squash's flavour well, including cinnamon, sage, ginger, basil and chilli. From a health point of view, steaming the squash is the best way to retain its nutrients.

Ok, I want to buy one...what am I looking out for?

You should look for squashes with as few blemishes as possible on the skin. They should feel heavy for their size, and firm. If the skin is soft, this means the squash is unripe.

While you can buy most produce all year round, remember seasonal veg always tastes best, and is usually cheaper.

When storing your squash, keep it in a cool, dry place and it should last for up to three weeks. Once you've opened it, wrap it in cling film and keep it in the fridge for up to seven days.

What about the other produce in the squash family?

Pumpkin is becoming more popular in the UK – whether for carving up at Halloween, or as a ingredient in soup, sweet pies, roasted or steamed. They can be used in place of butternut squash in many recipes and have a similar flavour. Pumpkins can range enormously in size – if you're buying segments of a larger pumpkin, make sure the flesh is not too stringy.

A Japanese squash – called kabocha – is also becoming more freely available. Dark green with lighter stripes, and orange flesh, the flesh is less dense than butternut and pumpkin. It is popular deep fried or used as a pie filling or in soups.

Onion squashes have a shorter shelf life than their more robust cousins, but are favoured for their melt in the mouth soft flesh. So-called for their onion-like shape, they are bright orange and are best used in soups and stews.

Small and green, acorn squashes have a chestnut like flavour which works well simply boiled as a side dish. They are also tasty sliced in half, then deseeded and baked. These squashes can be difficult to peel due to ridges in the skin, so it may be easier to remove the skin after cooking.

The name spaghetti squash reflects the yellow flesh that separates into strands when this variety is cooked. Its interior has the most distinctive appearance out of all the different types. Because of its stringiness, some people like to use the veg as spaghetti, coating it in a tomato sauce for a healthy alternative. It is also popular served cold as part of a salad.

Have you experimented with squash? Tweet, Instagram or facebook us with your weird and wonderful creations!



Butternut squash: The stats (Per 100g)

	% of daily value (based on 2000 cal diet)		% of daily value (based on 2000 cal diet)
Total fat 0.1g	0%	Protein 1g	2%
Saturated fat 0g	0%	Vitamin A	212%
Polyunsaturated fat 0g	0%	Calcium	4%
Monounsaturated fat 0g	0%	Vitamin D	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	Vitamin B-12	0%
Sodium 4mg	0%	Vitamin C	35%
Potassium 352mg	10%	Iron	3%
Total carbohydrate 12mg	4%	Vitamin B-6	10%
Dietary fibre 2g	8%	Magnesium	8%
Sugar 2.2g	8%		

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SQUASH RULES

These recipes show how versatile butternut can be

Squash, Mushroom and Kale Salad with Pumpkin and Pomegranate

Serves 4

- 1 small butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and diced
 - 3 tbsp coconut oil, melted
 - 2 tsp ground cumin
 - 1 shallot, chopped
 - 200g (7oz) portabellini mushrooms, thinly sliced
 - Bunch of kale
 - 3 tbsp pumpkin seeds
 - Seeds from 1 pomegranate
 - 2 tbsp olive oil
 - 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
 - Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Put the squash in a bowl with 2 tablespoons of the melted coconut oil and the cumin and season with salt and pepper. Mix well, then transfer to a roasting tin and bake in the preheated oven for about 40 minutes, flipping every 15 minutes. Once cooked, remove from the oven and leave to cool.
 2. Meanwhile, coat a frying pan with the remaining coconut oil and set over a medium to high heat. Add the chopped shallot and mushrooms and season with salt and pepper. Gently fry for 10 minutes, or until soft, then put to one side.
 3. Remove the stalks from the kale, stack the leaves on top of each other and roll up like a cigar shape, then slice into ribbons. Put the kale in a large bowl with 1 teaspoon sea salt and massage the leaves with your hands for 3–5 minutes. You will begin to see the kale soften as the moisture starts to seep out. Add the roasted squash, fried mushrooms and shallot and the pumpkin seeds and pomegranate seeds. Drizzle over the olive oil and apple cider vinegar before serving.

Recipe and image from *Superfoods* by Julie Montagu. Available online for £18.99 at juliemontagu.com





Curried Butternut Squash and Coconut Soup

Serves 6

- 1 onion, sliced
- 1kg (7 cups) cubed butternut squash
- 1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and sliced
- 1 celery stalk, sliced
- 960ml (4 cups) vegetable stock
- 1 to 2 tbsp curry powder, depending on taste
- 220ml (7oz) coconut milk
- 1 to 2 tsp lemon zest
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Lemon coconut cream

- 120ml (½ cup) coconut milk
- ½ tsp lemon zest
- 1 to 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ tsp sea salt

Garnish (optional)

- 55g (½ cup) slivered or sliced almonds, toasted

1. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the onion, squash, bell pepper, celery, stock, and curry powder, cover, and simmer until the vegetables are very tender. Using an immersion blender, process the mixture until smooth and creamy, or add the soup to a blender in batches to puree. To prevent the hot soup from splattering, remove the small cap from the lid to allow steam to escape, cover the hole with a kitchen towel, and blend until smooth and creamy; return to the saucepan. Stir in the coconut milk and lemon zest and season with salt and pepper.
2. To make the Lemon Coconut Cream, simply combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl and mix with a fork.
3. Pour the soup into individual bowls and top each bowl with a dollop of Lemon Coconut Cream and the toasted almonds. This soup is best enjoyed freshly made or the next day.

Recipe and image from *The Homemade Vegan Pantry* by Miyoko Schinner. Photographs by Eva Kolenko. Published by Ten Speed Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House LLC.

Mini Pumpkin Pie Bites Serves 2

Crust

- 90g (1 cup) instant quick or old fashioned oats
- 30g (¼ cup) pecans
- 40g (¼ cup) raisins
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tbsp unsweetened apple sauce
- 2 tbsp unsweetened almond milk

Filling

- 410g (2 cups) baked butternut squash/pumpkin
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp ginger
- ¼ tsp allspice
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp pure maple syrup (optional, adds sweetness)

Topping

- 1 tbsp instant quick or old fashioned oats
- 2 tbsp sliced almonds

1. Preheat oven to 176°C (350°F).
2. Chop the pumpkin/squash into small cubes and bake in the oven for about an hour until pumpkin pieces are soft.
3. Meanwhile, add all the ingredients for the crust into the blender, including the oatmeal, pecans, raisins, cinnamon, apple sauce, almond milk. Blend until it's mostly smooth. Spoon it out and press it onto a bread tray. (Don't worry if the mixture doesn't fill the entire tray).
4. After the pumpkin is ready, take it out and turn the oven up to 187°C (370°F)
5. Add the cooked pumpkin and all the pumpkin filling ingredients into the blender, including the cornstarch, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, nutmeg, vanilla extract and maple syrup.
6. Blend until it's smooth, and spoon it evenly on top of the crust and sprinkle the oatmeal and almonds on top.
7. Bake in the oven for about 40 minutes and allow it to cool off.
8. If you want it to harden more quickly, you can put it in the freezer for 10-15 minutes.

Recipe and images from divinehealthyfood.com



Spaghetti Squash Puttanesca Serves 2

- 1 spaghetti squash
- Water or oil

For the puttanesca sauce

- 1 medjool date
- 4 sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 leek
- 2 large tomatoes or 200g (1 cup) cherry tomatoes
- ½ red onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 5 olives, pitted then halved or chopped
- 6g (¼ cup) chopped fresh basil
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- ½ tsp oregano (chopped fresh or dried)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Garnishes

- 1 to 2 tbsp almond crumble
- A few olives, pitted then halved

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Cut the squash in half and remove the seeds. Place both halves, open side down, on a baking sheet. Add water or oil so that it doesn't stick. Bake for around 45 minutes, until the squash is fork tender. Remove from the oven.

2. To make the sauce: soak the date and the sun-dried tomatoes for around 5 minutes in warm water to soften them. Peel and pit the date, then chop both into small pieces.
3. Clean the leek and cut off the white part toward the bottom. Slice it in half, then slice thinly. Cut the tomatoes into small pieces. Peel and chop the onion and garlic.
4. Add the olive oil to a small saucepan over low heat and add the leek, onion, and garlic. Cook over low heat for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the date, sun-dried tomatoes, tomatoes, olives, basil, parsley, oregano, and a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook for just a few minutes, until the tomatoes become mushy, but the sauce is still fresh and chunky.
5. You can top the roasted squash halves with the sauce or remove the "noodles" with a fork, add to a bowl, and then top with the sauce for a more pasta-like look and feel. Before serving, top with the almond crumble and a few more olives.



Recipe and image from *Très Green, Très Clean, Très Chic: Eat (and Live!) the New French Way with Plant-Based, Gluten-Free Recipes for Every Season*, Rebecca Leffler. Available wherever books are sold. theexperimentpublishing.com





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MAGIC GARDEN

How to grow a veg feast – in the tiniest of spaces

If you've ever wanted to grow your own food, but thought you needed acres of space, turns out you were wrong. According to Lolo Houben, author of *One Magic Square*, you only need access to a single square metre of land to grow a wide bounty of vegetables.

Lolo wrote the book years after teaching a course of the same name in her native Australia. "In the late 1990s I had asked two garden club members to help me teach a course entitled *Grow Your Own Food on One Square Metre*. That caused a bit of laughter as we lived in a tiny town surrounded by thousands of hectares of agricultural land, although much of it was only rain-fed and drought was a frequent event."

She wrote the course of eight weekly workshops to be held in the community centre, assisted by two helpers with their own specialties

and vast input. They taught food growing from soil level up, organic principles, no chemicals.

"I encourage novice gardeners to start with one square to grow salad greens, then add a new square the next season and the next. This will reveal how much you can maintain without great effort."

She says: “We discussed how deep-rooted and shallow-rooted vegetables can cosily grow side by side and that a radish needs no more space than the size it is going to become. Participants learned hands-on to grow from seed. After individual punnets had been divided up, the first class of over 20 people ‘graduated’ with a treasure of mixed seedlings to plant in their well-prepared square metres at home.

“They were also taught to make compost with all refuse from kitchen and garden. The following year we repeated the course, including demonstrations by a professional cook and a couple who preserved colourful home produce in jars.”

The book suggests a number of plot designs, which are graded, starting with the easiest and most robust combinations, and getting more difficult. Lolo claims: “People get intimidated by the garden. It may be big, full of weeds or kids and dogs. Growing plants seems hard work, but in reality, with a little protection to keep animals out, nature does the growing.

“You don’t even need any expensive equipment - a kitchen fork or sharp stick can do the digging. Loosen hard soil, then cover with organic manure and compost. Plant roots will do the rest, if regularly watered. The book provides ideas on how to improve soils and what kind of recyclables can be used as plant protectors. Some sticks and string comes in handy to stake tall plants, or rope off the entire square.”

Different vegetables can be planted at different times of year. October is a good month for broad beans, asparagus, peas, garlic, onions, and various types of lettuce among others. Lolo says: “I encourage novice gardeners to start with one square to grow salad greens, then add a new square the next season and the next. This will reveal how much you can maintain without great effort.

“Potatoes grow in any heap of soil covered thickly with straw or grass cuttings, but make sure to plant in a new heap every year to prevent blight. One reader who had never grown anything, told an audience how he had followed the book’s sowing patterns from square one and after four years had become self-sufficient in vegetables from nine easily maintained square metres.

“To people without gardens I say ‘grow a salad box’ on back step or balcony. Half a dozen 20-25cm pots can grow parsley, coriander, endive, spring onions, one tomato and one cucumber plant, which enrich simple meals. Even hanging baskets can grow herbs and strawberries. Grow as much as you can manage, then supplement from a farmers’ market or organic greengrocer.”

“Self-reliance is a vegetable patch and a pantry with pickles and dried beans, so that you can always whip up a meal without leaving home.”

Despite the small scale of the plot, when people experiment with dense sowing and planting they are often amazed how many plants can grow in one square metre, providing bowls of fresh food, especially salads and beans.

For example, one square metre can grow 25 broadbean seeds into strapping stalks. Each stalk has at least 10 pods, so you can yield 250 pods, with at least five beans each. That’s a generous harvest of 1,250 beans.

Lolo says: “These beans can be eaten fresh, or as young pods, frozen, or dried on the stalk. Their roots sequester nitrogen from the air into the soil which is then used by other growing plants. So I love to tell people to plant half a square with beans, the other half with salad vegetables and reverse next year. This is as good as fool proof.”

According to the writer, this system has helped thousands of people who had never grown anything to find a renewed interest in food and discover the many joys of gardening. She says: “Busy professionals are proud to pick their own salad on coming home. The temporarily unemployed can, in these unbalanced times, build up their self-esteem as they put home grown food on the table.

“Some even found work in school gardens and nurseries to become horticulturists, growing fruit trees as well as vegetables. Without getting anxious about it, promise yourself to grow more vegetables and fruit every year because climate change is affecting global agricultural and horticultural yields. There may be shortages in future. Self-reliance is a vegetable patch and a pantry with pickles and dried beans, so that you can always whip up a meal without leaving home.

“Never overdo food gardening - grow into it to find your personal comfort zone. Happiness is a food plot.”



IS PROTEST A USEFUL TOOL IN BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE?

Protest is a form of collective action: a social movement where like-minded people come together to voice their opinion and effect change for the better. But does this always work?





YES

When you feel strongly about an issue, the best way to show this is in direct protest.

Those in power can ignore letters, phone calls and emails, but they can't ignore people gathering together and making their voices heard. Local groups represent an authentic voice, and the real concerns of the community.

In recent years, street protests in Egypt, Tunisia and Ukraine have actually contributed towards overthrowing government. People power can achieve incredible things - there is power in numbers, and power in solidarity. And what is the alternative? Apathy?

While social media certainly has a place in modern campaigning, it encourages a bland business model of protest, meticulously analysing the click rate and reach of a campaign, drains the passion, effort and the camaraderie.

Ian Burchill is the chairman of KAALE – Kent Against Animal Live Export. The group organises protests at Ramsgate and Dover when lorries of live animals travel through the ports. Ian says his group's direct action will not cease until the cruel stops completely.

He said: "During a protest, everyone feels part of a powerful group. You can build up tremendous relationships with people you may not otherwise have met.

"Protest galvanises action, but helps in other ways too: it gives people a voice, and it brings us together.

"With our protests we have seen a real difference in the trade – and we are continuing to see a difference.

"It doesn't matter who you are, or what you do. If you believe in the cause, you will be welcomed to protest against it. That's all we care about – stopping this cruelty."

NO

For change to happen on a meaningful scale, you need legislation. And there is case after case showing law makers ignoring protest.

Look at the Occupy Wall Street movement that started in 2011 – there were demonstrations against wealth distribution in well over 2,000 cities worldwide. And yet this effected no real change, and quickly fell out of the headlines.

Protesters often have the bad reputation of being violent and militant, which can damage a cause, as well as coming across as old-fashioned and out of step. Not to mention the number of people who get arrested during demonstrations.

We are now globally linked more powerfully than ever through the internet, and that is our strongest tool for change.

Matt James from east London is a freelance digital marketer with experience in the animal welfare sector. He said: "You can use the internet very successfully to build communities, who will spread causes. In the last few years, online petitions have become more powerful.

With the means to distribute them through social media, campaigners can reach more people than ever – and all at the touch of a button.

"Look at recent successes social media campaigns have had, as opposed to traditional protest: the social media furore over the death of Zimbabwean lion Cecil led to several airlines changing their policy on transporting hunting trophies. That is real change, as a result of online campaigning and untarnished by violent direct action.

"The truth about human nature is that we are more likely to do something that is easier. If you can register your disgust about something by pressing a few buttons, you are more likely to do it."

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THE THINKING VEGAN

Born Free president Will Travers OBE talks to Maria Slough about respect for animals



Image: Maria Slough

Will Travers is an internationally renowned wildlife expert and president of the Born Free Foundation and Born Free USA – a global charity that works to stop individual wildlife animal suffering, protect threatened species and promote compassionate conservation.

Will is so committed to raising money and awareness for the plight of wild animals he's scaled Mount Kilimanjaro twice. He heads up the Species Survival Network, which coordinates the activities of conservation, environmental and animal protection organizations around the world, as well as being involved in the rescue of numerous elephants, lions, tigers and dolphins.

In person, he is tall and dark with rugged good looks like his father the late actor and conservationist Bill Travers. He carries a relaxed air of authority with a kind grace that likens him to his mother, actress Virginia McKenna. Yet despite such revered heritage Will is very much his own person, and you immediately feel that he could solve any problem placed before him.

In April 2014, Will embarked upon a vegan diet. "I had been vegetarian since 1983 and I have lots of friends who are vegan," he explains.

"I started to consider further the implications of a vegetarian lifestyle on animal welfare issues, farming on an industrial level and with regards to animal husbandry or abuse depending on your point of view, and decided that becoming vegan was worth a go. I have to say it has been pretty good but I am still a work in progress."

Many vegans can pinpoint a devastating image or a horrific experience that triggered their decision. For Will it was a much more gentle transition. As someone who often sees shocking images of animal abuse, it was a more intellectual process, imagining the plight of animals like calves who are ripped away from their crying mothers in the first days of life and slaughtered. All for a glass of milk.

He says: "Because this doesn't happen in a way that is very visible to people and because we have become so immune to the processes that sit behind the production of the food found on our supermarket shelf, we are neither aware or responsible or sensitised.

"We pass the buck in so many ways, assuming no responsibility. Take the labelling system. It is important to have the information available on how and where it is produced, but even that absolves us from the individual responsibility of what happens behind that label. If you see a

humane production label on a product, that doesn't necessarily mean that the process is fine.

"We need to see that label as an opportunity for us as individuals to question, challenge, make our own decisions and take responsibility. I made a decision to start asking questions and the answer was to follow a vegan diet."

"As a child, Will had the kind of adventures most children only read about in story books."

With the ongoing debate to push for CCTV in slaughterhouses, our conversation led to the question of whether transparency in the meat industry would lead to more people changing their eating habits.

He says: "I think some would, some would choose not to watch. I have seen footage of animals being slaughtered in a top quality slaughterhouse, highly regulated, and even that was sheer brutality.

"The numbness that comes with it is shocking, the attitude of the practitioners because they become completely desensitised to what they are doing. But as long as they 'follow the rules' they think that what they are doing is ok. It depends where you set the bar. In a sense the bar is always set too low."

As a child, Will had the kind of adventures most children only read about in story books. When he was five years old he travelled to Kenya to live with his parents who were making the film, Born Free, based on a real life tale of a couple who raised a lion cub.

Will spent much of his time with Nell, a border collie, who then returned to the UK with the family after filming had finished. It was at this time he was first introduced to lions.

"We got to go on set occasionally and saw the lions in their compounds," he says. "One night we were asked to go to our rooms and stay there. We were only a few kilometres from the set and one of the lions had broken out of the compound. We sat there for a few hours until he had been found.

"I don't remember feeling afraid though as my parents had always talked about animals and my dad, Bill, had explained how to behave if we encountered any dangerous wildlife. He told us not to jump up and down and wave our arms about if we met a lion - 'stay still, keep an eye on the lion and walk backwards very slowly' he would say. So we were prepared.

"The part of Kenya where the film was made was still full of wild animals like lions and elephants. I suppose they were as much a part of our daily life as cats and dogs are for most children."

At 12 years old Will was introduced to another lion named Christian who lived in a furniture shop on the King's Road in Chelsea.

"When Mum and Dad met him they invited him to our garden and he stayed there for four months while they negotiated his release back into the wild. That didn't seem particularly unusual to me, to look out of my bedroom window in Surrey and see him relaxing in the enclosure

we had built for him. It seemed normal to us. What else could you do? Send him to a zoo?"

I wondered if Will had ever wanted to be a fireman or a doctor or if animals were always destined to be a focal point of his life?

"Well for a while I tried acting and I was truly awful at it. Then I worked in film distribution with Dad on his films but as Mum and Dad's love and fascination for the animal and plant world grew, so did mine."

The close contact Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers shared with the lions while filming Born Free sparked their lifelong commitment to wildlife, and led to them realising their vision- wild animals belong in the wild, not incarcerated in captivity. In 1984 Born Free – under the name Zoo Check – was formed.

Will says: "The early years were good fun, magical really. We typed our first newsletter by hand at the kitchen table; we cut out four or five stories, corrected them with tipex and used invisible tape to paste them together so that when we photocopied them nobody could see the joins.

"Working until the early hours of the morning to get the newsletters out we produced 200 initially then it grew to 400 and 600 and became quite crazy."

"We have never lost that ultimate vision, that wildlife belongs in the wild and not in a zoo."

During those early days, did they ever imagine it would grow to become a global organization?

"We always had a vision and we thought perhaps naively, that it would quickly come true, that we could achieve a world without zoos," says Will.

"I still believe we can achieve this: it will just take more time. The Zoo Check programme still remains at the heart of Born Free. We understand there are many practical implications to consider and it's going to take a great deal of effort and a change in mindset.

"We have never lost the ultimate vision that wildlife belongs in the wild and not in a zoo. If you put people into an unreal proximity with an animal that under normal circumstances you would not get close to, your respect for them changes. You put the animal into a position of subservience to your dominance as opposed to one of respect."

From a vegan perspective I wanted to know Will's thoughts on animals' rights to their own life.

"We absolve ourselves from any responsibility towards animals when it comes to food as we only see them in the field or chopped up in cellophane.

"I will always try not to hurt an animal, always try to preserve life and to respect the animal and its own decision making process and self-determination. >



“Animals are not machines. Animals have a purpose just by living. It doesn’t have to be defined by human use. Use is totally different to purpose. You can ‘use’ animals in any number of different ways but it doesn’t mean that their purpose is to be there for you to use them in any way.

“One should permit an animal to fulfil its physiological, psychological and social destiny with the minimum amount of human interference. The trouble is that today human interference is almost the default setting. We interfere with everything.”

“One should permit an animal to fulfil its physiological, psychological and social destiny with the minimum amount of human interference. The trouble is that today human interference is almost the default setting. We interfere with everything.

“So the question that you have to ask yourself is how little interference can I impose on others? A vegan lifestyle is all part of minimising the way we interfere with the life of animals.”

Born Free is now planning to establish Europe’s first elephant sanctuary. At least 40 plus solitary elephants are living in zoos and circuses in totally inappropriate environments across the continent. The sanctuary will give them the opportunity to be elephants again. With no breeding and very carefully controlled human interface, a significant degree of self-determination will be restored for the elephants. It is what Will describes as a ‘legacy project’.

“You have to bear in mind that these animals may live another 30 years so you have to be in this for the long haul. It is something that we need desperately for the elephants’ sake and it seems shameful to me that we haven’t already got one, got our heads around this and put it in place. It’s Born Free’s goal to achieve this for these creatures.”

I ask Will to leave me with one last thought about his interaction with animals.

“I would say that I am an animal respecter,” he says. “I really respect animals for all the things that they can do, good and bad. Sometimes getting to know and to understand an animal means you have to keep your distance and that is giving them respect.”

bornfree.org.uk

Journey to a plant-based diet

Will Travers first decided to become vegetarian many years ago, while visiting a city farm.

As someone who champions the need for children to develop a better understanding of animals, he felt that the standards at the city farm depicted an incredibly inaccurate representation of how livestock actually live.

He felt it created an idealized image of our relationship with animals that provide food, milk and wool, whereas in reality, only around 0.2 per cent of animals live like that - the rest are subjected to intensive farming and horrific conditions.

About 20 years later, he decided to become fully vegan.

He says: "I went cold turkey, no turning back but I would suggest to anyone wanting to go vegan to try two or three days a week initially.

"Plan it and cook yourself something delicious. I found lots of menu tips in Vegan Life. There are so many vegan substitutes as well that can help you along the way.

"One of my favourites is Tofurkey which is now sold in the UK and I always have Linda McCartney sausages in my freezer.

"I think over the next 30 years the desire for healthy food rather than just cheap food will be a driving force that will have a higher welfare agenda and aid veganism but we need more leadership and education at the civil society level to continue to inspire change."



Images:
Born Free
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HOW TO VEGANISE: MILK

A guide to milk for those who've ditched the dairy

For many people, milk is one of the last products they give up on the road to veganism. Whether splashed in your cuppa, or drizzled in a recipe, it can play a large part in any omnivorous or vegetarian diet.

But luckily, milk is one of the easiest things to replace in a vegan diet. Not only are shop shelves groaning under the weight of all the non-dairy milk substitutes (also known as 'mylk'), you can also cheaply and easily make your own, which will store in the fridge for a couple of days. Favourites include soya, rice, oat, coconut, almond and hazelnut – and all have their own qualities, strengths and health benefits.



Soya

The most easily available of the non-dairy drinks, it is usually an option in coffee shops, and works well in lattes and cappuccini, as well as tea, although it can curdle in instant coffee. There is a huge variety on the market, with different brands, level of sweetness and flavour – the best thing is trial and error to find one that suits.

Create your own by soaking 85g of dried soya beans in boiling water. Leave them for 12 hours, changing water (cold is fine) at least once. After soaking, drain the beans then transfer to a blender. Add 500ml of cold water, and blitz until smooth. Strain the mixture through muslin, then simmer in a pan for 20 minutes, adding 1 tsp of vanilla extract and 1 tsp caster sugar. Leave to cool.

Almond and hazelnut

These nutritional powerhouses are stuffed with goodness, including fibre, calcium and magnesium – and they make a tasty and versatile drink too.



To make your own, simply soak skinless nuts (you can also use hazel, Brazil, cashew or macadamia varieties) for 8-24 hours, changing the water at least once. Transfer a combination of one part nuts to two parts water to a blender, and mix on full power until you have a very smooth and creamy liquid. Strain through muslin, and dilute to taste.



Oat

Oat milk is becoming increasingly popular in coffee shops, because of its creamy taste and texture in drinks like lattes. There is a growing number of brands available to buy. Alternatively, rinse a cup of rolled oats in cold water, and leave them to soak in boiled water for 20 minutes. After draining and rinsing, you can blitz them with 750ml of cold water, until smooth.

Rice

Unlike cow's milk, rice milk doesn't contain cholesterol. Commercial brands are also often fortified with niacin, vitamin B12, vitamin A, vitamin D and iron, making it a good option, which works well for baking.



While homemade rice milk won't be fortified, it is still a good, low fat, and tasty option. Toasting the rice first (either white or brown) gives it a nicer flavour – you can do this in a dry frying pan. Take it off the heat when it starts to darken. Cook the rice according to your usual method, then drain, before transferring to a blender with 650ml of cold water. Blend until smooth, then strain through a sieve to get rid of any remaining rice grains.



Coconut

One of the most fashionable foodstuffs at the moment is coconut, with chefs and consumers turning to a variety of products in their droves, from yoghurt, ice 'cream' and oil to, of course, milk. This is a great option for tea and instant coffee – it doesn't curdle, and it lightens your drink in the same way cow's milk does. Depending on brand, it doesn't have a strong, nutty flavour, so is an excellent starter option for those moving away from dairy. On top of all that, it's stuffed with calcium and vitamin D.

AVO À LA MODE

These tartine recipes use avocado to delicious effect



Recipes and image from *Très Green, Très Clean, Très Chic: Eat (and Live!) the New French Way with Plant-Based, Gluten-Free Recipes for Every Season*, Rebecca Leffler, 2015. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, The Experiment. theexperimentpublishing.com

1

Avocado Tartine Au Naturel

- 2 slices of gluten-free bread
- 1 small avocado, pitted and peeled
- A pinch of cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp lemon or lime juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Toast the bread. In a bowl, mash the avocado and other ingredients together with a fork. Spread onto the toast. Voilà!

2

Hurried and Curried Avocado Tartine

Add a pinch of curry powder to the top of your 'avocado tartine au naturel.'

3

Herbed Avocado Tartine

Chop up some fresh basil, chives, coriander (cilantro), and parsley and mix into the mashed avocado mixture.

4

Miso-Carrot Tartine

Grate 1 small carrot and mix with 1 teaspoon of miso paste and a splash of lemon juice. Top the avocado toast with this mixture.

5

Choucroute Garnie Tartine

Top your 'avocado tartine au naturel' with 1 to 2 tablespoons sauerkraut.

6

Avocado and White Bean Tartine

Mix together 15g (1/4 cup) white beans, mashed avocado, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper, and fresh or dried herbs. Spread onto toast.

7

Sweet Avocado Tartine

Mash an avocado in a bowl with 1/2 banana. Spread onto toast. Top with a pinch of cinnamon and/or a drizzle of maple syrup.

8

B.L.T

- 250g (1 cup) coconut flakes OR aubergine (eggplant) sliced into 1/4 inch strips
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp coconut aminos OR tamari
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar

This will make up your 'bacon'. Add coconut flakes or aubergine to a bowl. If using aubergine, toss with salt and olive oil and marinate for at least 10 minutes. Toss the oiled and salted aubergine or coconut flakes with the maple syrup, coconut aminos or tamari, apple cider vinegar and salt and pepper to taste. Add a pinch of paprika or cayenne pepper for an extra kick. Let marinate for at least 1 hour, preferably for 3 or more. Bake at 175°C (350°F) for 10 to 15 minutes, or dehydrate for around 8 hours, until crispy.

Add a layer of your coconut or aubergine 'bacon', a layer of lettuce, a sliced tomato plus the always optional, but always awesome, avocado.



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UNITY

Earthlings director Shaun Monson talks about his new film, veganism, and hope



A decade after releasing his groundbreaking film *Earthlings*, director Shaun Monson is back on the scene with another breathtaking documentary.

Unity – the fruit of a seven year labour – is about compassion towards what Shaun describes as ‘all expressions of life’ – human, animal and environmental.

It boasts over 100 diverse celebrity narrators including Jennifer Aniston, Dr Dre and Helen Mirren, as well as a beautifully crafted script delivered over a montage of iconic footage from the 20th and 21st centuries.

According to Shaun who is an activist for human, animal, and environmental rights: “The entire focus of *Earthlings* is how humankind uses animals for economic purposes. *Unity* expands that message to encompass not only on how we use animals and nature but also each other.

“There’s only 14 minutes of animal footage in *Unity*. That’s 14 minutes out of 98 - I thought it was a good starting point. Of course everyone wants to save the whales and the dolphins, but then care less about what is happening every day to animals like cows, chickens, pigs – this is called separation based on form.”

This message – which features in both *Unity* and *Earthlings* - introduced the concept of speciesism to thousands of people, cementing the success of the film.

According to philosopher Tom Regan: ““For those who watch *Earthlings*, the world will never be the same.”

And actor Joaquin Phoenix, who narrated the movie added: ““Of all the films I have ever made, this is the one that gets people talking the most. For every one person who sees *Earthlings*, they will tell three.”

But despite the acclaim of *Earthlings*, surely working with so many established names must have been intimidating?

“One of the hardest parts was directing the narrators,” Shaun tells *Vegan Life*. “There are hours of dialogue, but they would just have received a couple of pages. Then I had to edit 100 voices together as if they were a single voice. I experimented with different voices completing the others’ sentences, or how they flowed side by side. I had planned to keep changing voices throughout the film and not return to the same voices very often. About a third of the cast only has a line or two.”

Unity opens with disturbing footage in an abattoir, where the viewer watches hopelessly as cows queue awaiting death. While the film doesn’t show their graphic slaughter, watching the cows as their mouths foam in fear, and they try and back away from the killing room, is devastating.

And most of the footage is deliberately audacious and unflinching in this way – it does not sugarcoat, rather forces the watcher to acknowledge some very uncomfortable truths, and ask some difficult questions. Why can’t humans co-exist peacefully? What gives us the right to use and kill animals and other humans?

With such an explicit moral viewpoint, was there any conflict in working with narrators who may not share his vegan values?

Shaun says: “There is a disclaimer at the beginning of the film, saying not everyone who contributed to it may agree with all the opinions. It’s very difficult to get so many people to agree on one thing – even getting two people in a marriage to agree on a single idea can be a challenge, so there will always be those differences. But I hope the idea of unity itself, and people’s support of that ethos, is enough to make people feel they can be involved.”



He also believes having these well-known performers involved undoubtedly opened the movie up to a wider audience too – “Would we have a theatrical release without the celebrities involved? We could have the same film, but without those names, exhibitors may not have wanted to screen it.”

According to Shaun: “I wouldn’t want to alienate anyone who isn’t a vegan or a vegetarian, or to make them feel they couldn’t be part of the unity of life.”

“There is that line that gets repeated in the film: not the same, but equal. Can you imagine a world that could really understand that simple sentence?”

“The way I think about it, every car, whether it’s brand new, top of the range, or old and ruined, has a blind spot. So I would think that we all have blind spots in our evolution of consciousness. If you haven’t got to that place yet, you don’t want to feel judged for it. Education is the important thing, and planting seeds, always remembering some will fall on stony ground.”

To encapsulate the idea of unity, the director wanted a chorus of voices that became a symphony. He did consider approaching what he describes as the ‘everyman’ but decided to use trained actors as they are professional ‘emotion enablers’.

Shaun says: “If you give someone like Helen Mirren some dialogue, she can breathe life into it. So these narrators brought that ability to give the work a really powerful resonance – it’s what they do.”

Despite the success of his earlier work – and the A-list heavyweights on board - funding Unity was still a struggle.

“We tried to crowdfund it, which was a failure,” says Shaun. “I think people see the names of the actors and others involved, and think we have a good budget – which isn’t the case. Some suggested we ask the contributors for funding.”

“But when you have narrators of this calibre, it is huge that they are contributing their work for free – we can’t really ask for more. I’d say fundraising is my least favourite part of the process.”

The film was exhibited in a unique way: on August 12, the film opened in almost 1,000 screens worldwide, for a communal viewing. London’s screening in Covent Garden was a huge success, selling-out.

Shaun is now planning a third film, to complete the trilogy – focussing on the idea of nature. He said: “We don’t tend to imagine nature as distinct and separate states – it’s not an individual tree or rock or insect or river or animal. Nature is not separate selves, all of these things are what we consider nature. So the idea of the third installment is to stop separating the inseparable.”

Despite the harrowing imagery in the film, the violence towards animals and humans, hope is also an important part of the narrative.

“I am hopeful humans beings can change,” says Shaun. “There is that line that gets repeated in the film: not the same, but equal. Can you imagine a world that could really understand that simple sentence?”

For more information about Unity - including how to see the it, visit unitythemovement.com.



BLOOD LINES

Using striking images to start a dialogue

For photography student Scarlett Carson, documenting veganism in her art was a strange experience.

“The subject matter is very upsetting,” she explains. “But as you get caught up in the creative process you start enjoying it.”

As a vegan of just under a year, her newfound lifestyle was the obvious inspiration for creating *Vegetarian* – a series of six photos she displayed in an exhibition at Leeds Gallery in June this year.

“Veganism is often considered as purely dietary but it is a philosophy and a way of life.”

“Throughout my degree course (at Leeds City College) it has been emphasised that our work should be personal, and it should have significance. After I became vegan, I quickly started to get immersed in that online community, which is very important to me,” Scarlett says.

“Veganism is often considered as purely dietary but it is a philosophy and a way of life. Unlike the word vegetarian, the word vegan specifically implies moral concern for animals. Working with the concept, and studying it gave me a much greater understanding.”

According to Scarlett, photography allows her a satisfying creative outlet, building a composition, sending a message, and telling a story as she determines the aesthetic.

“It’s a very creative process, from developing a concept to the final images,” she says. “It’s a medium that allows for experimentation with time capturing a split second that might not register on the human eye, through to long exposure images that again show things in a way we wouldn’t normally see them.”

As well as trying to engage viewers in a dialogue, the artist was trying to avoid falling into the trap of excluding people by being too militant.

She says: “Veganism is a complex topic, I have lots of feelings about it; I’m sorry that I didn’t realise certain realities sooner. I’ve always been a very emotional and empathic person, especially where animals and nature are concerned. Since becoming vegan my resolve has only strengthened.

“But if you hit people over the head with that, it turns them off. So you have to understand people aren’t at the same point as you – you want to grab them, and shake them, and make them feel how you feel. But I too used to eat meat and dairy once, and I have had to go on a journey to get to this point. >





“When you’re too pushy, people get defensive and need to convince you they are in the right. If you open up the conversation, people are more receptive. One person at the exhibition said she was confused about how looking at the piece of cauliflower was making her feel – and how an image could make her feel like that.

“But this was the aim – to get people thinking about the story behind the pictures.”

“All of these pieces are a response to some of the common issues surrounding veganism as a lifestyle choice and the wider environmental impact of the meat industry.”

Conceptually, the images started out very differently. As she became more involved in the vegan community, and increased her awareness of certain themes in terms of questions and criticisms, Scarlett wanted to react to them, but in a way where nobody could get defensive or feel like they were being judged.

She started to work with food, building compositions that were colourful and happy, with a subtle message that could be interpreted as the viewer chose.

“But time went on I started to embrace starker images,” she explains. “I looked at what I was planning to do and how it would change and I instantly knew it was the direction I wanted the piece to take.

“I recall seeing a crystal cut bowl in a shop window, it had small spouts all around it and I had a vision of food piled high and the bowl overflowing, as though the fruits or vegetables were bleeding. I couldn’t shake this image, so I bought the bowl, and it became the photo with the strawberries.”

The studio was the next stage. As part of her process, Scarlett always plans the images carefully, finding that organisation allows for greater creativity.

She says: “I always try to let the images take their natural course. I of course create what I have planned, but once I have it I don’t stop there, I let the scenes develop and evolve.

“The image of vegetables on meat hooks was originally much cleaner, I hung them and dipped them in the ‘blood’ and photographed them dripping. That was the plan. The final image however is something far more masochistic, the vegetables, the hooks and pole are all covered. The cauliflower, once completely drenched, was far more brutal than I ever predicted.”

And all the images evolved in this way, developing as she took to the studio, becoming stronger pieces – only the strawberries are exactly as envisioned.



“The most controversial image is the bible soaked in blood. This is a response to religion being used as an excuse to breed, imprison, torture and slaughter animals - it is not an attack on religion, rather a response to the absurdity of referencing a 2,500 year old text to 21st century life.

“All of these pieces are a response to some of the common issues surrounding veganism as a lifestyle choice and the wider environmental impact of the meat industry.

“These images of strawberries overflowing with blood and vegetables hanging from ‘meat hooks’ are a response to the clichéd ‘but plants feel pain too’ argument.

Additional pictures in the series showed a bloody clock, as well as fast food packaging covered in blood, and a jug of water with a cloud of red liquid seeping inside.

“The blood in the clock replaces the hands, displaying a time of 11:55pm. This is indicative of the limited time we have to make crucial changes to the way we use the planet and its resources.”

Both the jug and the packaging pictures refer to the global impact of the meat industry. In particular the jug refers to the environmental impact, regarding the amount of water used to grow additional crops to feed animals bred and destined for the slaughter house. The packaging is a more direct reference to the financial contribution people make to this industry when buying these products.

In the future, Scarlett plans to further incorporate her interest in the environmental aspect of veganism in her work. “I want to explore the themes of littering and pollution - how we take care of our houses, because we consider them to be our homes, but for many there seems to be a degree of separation with the concept of ‘home’ and the cities and planet we inhabit.

“I want to keep being inspired by veganism, and help people understand what it is. It is so easy to live this lifestyle, because I don’t just do it for myself: I do it for the planet, and I do it for the animals.”

“I want to explore this by bringing examples of littering and pollution through the front door and into our houses, our homes.

“I want to keep being inspired by veganism, and help people understand what it is. It is so easy to live this lifestyle, because I don’t just do it for myself: I do it for the planet, and I do it for the animals.”

To see more of Scarlett’s work visit scarlettcarrson.co.uk.



CHAIN REACTION

How antioxidants can fight toxins from the inside

The subject of antioxidants comes up in nearly all of my sessions with clients – it is a buzzword that's used a lot, but most people don't really know what it means.

So just why are antioxidants important?

Modern life throws a lot of what we call oxidants at us. Exposure to an excess of oxidants - toxic forms of oxygen that can wreak havoc upon every cell in our bodies – can lead to disease. Although some of these oxidants can be waste products from normal human metabolic processes such as breathing, the majority of these harmful invaders usually come from our less than perfect modern day environment.

Air pollutants, pesticides, cigarette smoke, drugs and poor dietary choices are just the start. Unless counteracted efficiently (don't worry I will tell you how to do this shortly), these oxidants can leach their way in to the system, and cause a devastating chain reaction on our health (see box).

The good news is it is possible to work against the negative effects of oxidants – antioxidants do just that.

What oxidants do:

- Promote inflammation (arthritis, asthma, eczema)
- Attack DNA, leading to cell mutation (the first step towards cancer)
- Turn cholesterol in to a form that may promote clogging of arteries
- Damage nerve cells, leading to neurological deterioration such as Parkinson's Disease
- Damage cells in the eyes, possibly leading to cataracts or macular degeneration
- Damage sperm cells
- Increase the ageing process of the skin

The list really is endless, and I would not be able to add them all here, but the point is these oxidants cause damage at such a cellular level, they provide the ideal environment for virtually any disease to stem from. The worst part about it is that their destructive process is so subtle over such an extended period of time, that you may not notice until disease or ill health has kicked in.

To put it simply, they circulate our body and intercept and extinguish any of these free radicals that they come across, while some are even capable of reversing the damage that the oxidants may have caused in the first place.

The exciting part about this is that the most effective way of improving your antioxidant status is eating plant-based foods. So when you're sitting down to a beautifully prepared vegan meal, rest assured you are supplying your cells and tissues with an abundance of naturally occurring plant based phytonutrients that are packed with antioxidants.

These plant-based antioxidants come in all shapes and sizes, from the well-known nutrients Vitamin C & E, beta carotene and selenium, to the lesser known quercetin, glutathione, lycopene and lutein.

Nutrient	How It Works	Where To Find It
Beta carotene	An antioxidant with an orange pigment. Linked particularly with cardiovascular health. Low levels of this potent antioxidant have correlated with higher levels of cancer (in particular of the lungs).	<p>Dark orange fruit and vegetables: Sweet potato, carrots, apricots, pumpkin, butternut squash.</p> <p>Green leafy vegetables: Kale, spinach, broccoli, collard greens, chard.</p>
Vitamin C	Probably the most well-known of all the antioxidants, and with good reason, its health benefits are endless. It works alongside vitamin E, to help boost antioxidant power.	<p>Most potent sources: Red and green sweet peppers, citrus fruits, goji berries, baobab (available in powder from to mix in to smoothies or breakfast bowls), broccoli, cauliflower.</p> <p>All fruit and vegetables will contain Vitamin C to some extent.</p>
Vitamin E	Like beta carotene, vitamin E is highly associated with cardiovascular health. It also has the benefit of being fat soluble, meaning it can help protect fat molecules against oxidative damage.	Almonds, soya beans, sunflower seeds, wheat germ oil, hazelnuts.

My tips for increasing the antioxidant levels in your diet

Choose organic - Many of our crops are now sprayed with pesticides and hormones to make sure that the plants grow quicker to meet the demand of the public. The problem with this is many of these chemicals infiltrate the soil and are taken up by the plants, meaning that simply washing your fruit and vegetables well isn't going to remove all traces of these harmful substances.

It is more expensive to buy organic, but your body will thank you for it, as you won't have excess free radicals running around your system, needing to be eradicated. Even if your budget doesn't stretch to buying organic, try and look around your local farmers markets, as they will almost certainly be using less pesticides than some of the larger scale companies.

Favour fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables - Tinned fruit/vegetables and ready meals are not your friend.

You probably wouldn't want to know how long ago the produce in them was harvested. The moment something is picked, its nutrient density immediately starts to decrease as it's been cut off from its food source - think about how malnourished you would be if you hadn't eaten for weeks.

So when it comes to picking your fruit and vegetables, the fresher the better. You may be asking why frozen fruit and vegetables? You may think that these foods would be rate pretty low in the nutrient stakes, but you would be wrong. >

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Good suppliers will often freeze their produce as soon as it's been picked, meaning that the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants in them are sealed in, and are not given the chance to go rancid. Therefore, if you can't get hold of good quality local produce, frozen is the next best option.

"Good suppliers will often freeze their produce as soon as it's been picked, meaning that the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants in them are sealed in."

Be bright - Brightly coloured fruits and vegetables tend to be richer in antioxidants such as vitamins C, E and beta carotene than any other foods (see the table for more information on these foods and what they do), and therefore I would put at them at top of your list if you're looking to clear out those free radicals quickly.

You can even try out my recipe for almond encrusted sweet potato and butternut squash fries at the end of this article.

Go green – Dark leafy vegetables such as kale and spinach are fantastic sources of both vitamin C and beta carotene – double the antioxidant hit.

The current craze is for green juices. There are plenty of companies making ready-made ones but be careful of drinks that are too processed or have extra sugar added. If you have your own juicer or blender at home, you can make your own.

Bulk up your meals – The last thing you want to do is slave away in the kitchen making extravagant meals after a busy day at work, so you opt for something quick like a bowl of pasta.

But something quick and simple can still be nutritious. The way to do this is by bulking up your meals with fruit and vegetables.

A good option is halving your portion of pasta or grain, and grating some fresh vegetables – sweet potato and courgette work well – in to a small pan and quickly sautéing them for a few minutes, before combining them with the grains before serving.

This is a fantastic way of boosting the nutrient and antioxidant levels of your meal and also a clever way of sneaking something healthy into a child's meal.

Almond Encrusted Sweet Potato and Butternut Squash Fries

As Autumn is now in full swing, I love to eat more comforting foods. Root vegetables such as sweet potato and butternut squash are ideal. This recipe makes an excellent alternative to French fries, but is packed with far more nutrients, including an abundance of antioxidants.

I like to eat a bit of protein with every meal to keep me fuller for longer, and this is what the almond crust coating is here for. It also gives the fries a real crunch if you're like me and love them crispy.

I season mine with fennel seeds as they lend a real zing, and are packed with nutrients essential for detoxification.

Recipe from *Joe Jackson* (joejacksonnutrition.com)

- 1 sweet potato
- 1/3 butternut squash
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 1/2 cup almonds
- 2 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 tsp pink Himalayan salt



1. Slice the sweet potato using a mandolin on its thickest setting. Chop the butternut squash in to quarters, and peel the skin off of the quarter you are going to use. Use the mandolin as you did with the sweet potato. You can then slice the pieces smaller if you wish (I chop them in half lengthways).
2. Melt the coconut oil in a pan, then remove from the heat. Add the sweet potato and butternut squash slices, making sure each piece is sufficiently covered.
3. Blitz the almonds in a blender until they form a bread crumb consistency. Combine with the fennel seeds and pink Himalayan salt in a bowl and mix well.
4. One at a time, dip the sweet potato and butternut squash slices in to the almond mixture, making sure they are lightly dusted all over.
5. Place the fries in to the oven at 200 degrees celsius, and bake for around 25 minutes, making sure to rotate them every 10 minutes or so.
6. Serve straight away with a small side salad and your favourite dip

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BASQUE-ING IN BILBAO

Michael Lee Donnelly finds tasty vegan fare in this Spanish city



Vegan adventurers will enjoy the diverse animal-friendly fare on offer in Bilbao, the central city in the Bizkaia region of the Basque Country.

The former industrial powerhouse of steel and iron displays a progressive attitude to the plant-based diet with restaurants, supermarkets and even local delicatessens stocking vegan options for the peckish pintxo (small snack) seeker.

As a place of art and architecture, Bilbao attracts those looking to nourish their minds as well as their stomachs. Straddling traditional Basque culture and the Spanish equivalent, Bilbao has a bevy of cafés and bars open from early morning until late. However, with many observing the siesta period of the day, visitors are advised to be savvy about which eateries they visit to avoid disappointing waits. A quick check with the local tourist office to find information on local bank holidays would be shrewd and most places are closed on Sunday as a matter of course.

When visiting attractions, there will be a café or two within walking distance. Finding one that serves soya milk is a gamble, but a fine substitute is to ask for an espresso or black tea. For those of an alcohol-friendly persuasion, there is an array of vegan-friendly beers, wines and spirits for reasonable prices. As a note of etiquette, paying upon order is not expected but is welcomed in any case. Gratuity is warmly received.

Navigation is easy enough using public transport with metro, bus and trams frequently in action. As a personal recommendation, the metro is the most user-friendly and effective, as the line scythes through the city from east to west.

In the three full days of visiting, I had the pleasure of visiting six establishments offering food for the discerning vegan. However, I was only able to sample the delights of five of them, with the reputable *Jatetxe Berdea* closed for the local holiday. The sight of the tastefully adorned, albeit shuttered, store front mural of fruit and vegetables was of some compensation. It is only open for a few hours daily, so if you are keen to eat there, make it a priority.

The mandatory name on the list for high-quality vegan provisions is *La Camelia*. Serving a Japanese inspired collection of sushi, there are actually two outlets. The smaller of the two is nestled in the narrow streets of Casco Viejo and offers sushi and drinks.

The larger and more comprehensive is the *Camelia Vegan Bar*. It has a taster menu of six clearly named options, each of which includes a trio of dishes. Highly regarded is the wakame and the miso soup. The restaurant also stocks herbal teas, dried vegan staples and a range of beers and wine, plus some rather tasty treats of homemade cakes, and is open throughout the day from 11am to 11pm.

“For those of an alcohol-friendly persuasion, there is an array of vegan-friendly beers, wines and spirits for reasonable prices.”

The charming *Café Obrador Okapi* in the Casco Viejo district is a relaxed and bi-lingual artisan spot. The menu is complete with lunch and dinner offers and there is a generous collection of drinks on offer, including a good cup of English breakfast tea with soya milk a welcome addition. The chef and manager speaks enough English to be able to order without hassle and was only too happy to advise that one dish would suffice as an ample lunch. I highly recommend the falafel with vegan aioli. There is also clear labelling on the menu and free wi-fi, while there is a library of books to read and even artwork on display by local artist Alberto Muriel. These are available to buy quite cheaply.

For a North American flavoured experience, try *Hot Dog's House* and *La Cantina Tapachula*. Both are just minutes from the cluster of tourist hotels in the city centre. Though not exclusively vegan, they are accommodating and satisfying.

At *Hot Dog's*, the menu lists both a tofu hotdog and a seitan burger, with typical fast food additions such as gherkins and sauce charged very fairly. You can also order good old-fashioned chips – sauces and condiments are provided free of charge.

The menu of *Tapachula* may be limited for vegans, but is worth it all the same, with the serving staff happy to advise how a dish could be made vegan-friendly. Smooth and chunky guacamole are made fresh to order as well as a spicy salsa. The vegetable tortilla and vegetable flautas are safe choices to avoid any sour cream or melted cheese mishaps.

A word of caution is that both restaurants can be quite busy and also observe the siesta hours.

If feeling bold with time on your hands, *Pepintxo's* in the Barakaldo district is a worthwhile if surreal destination. Embracing its vegetarian identity the dining room is complete with artwork of eccentric cartoon vegetables. Though staff don't speak English they are happy to try and negotiate how to best serve their four-course set menu for vegan tastes. A reasonable command of Spanish before you visit is advisable but not essential. You are guaranteed a full stomach and a wry smile by the time you have finished your meal.

Availability of fruit and vegetables and health food is very good in Bilbao city centre, with ecológicas organic stores dotted around and supermarkets with shelves stocked with milk alternatives and canned vegetables, fresh salads and fruit juices. Delicatessens have a range of dried pulses and fresh vegan stock, for those planning a longer stay.



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Hugletts Wood Farm in East Sussex provides a home to farm animals who have been rescued from slaughter or abuse. Founders Wenda Shehata and Matthew Sparey look after 279 animals, without any employees or volunteers. It is the UK's only vegan farm sanctuary, as well as being the only to have a dedicated cow protection programme. They also take on birds, pigs and more – including sheep.

During lambing season, the couple will take in a number of rescues – they all need round the clock care, regular feeds - and special little outfits.

“We have some acrylic woolly coats made by a dog coat company in Wales, who sent them over when the lambs were starting to go out in May,” explains Wenda. “Then one of our long term supporters wrote in and offered to knit some more from vegan wool. We said we can use as many as she and her friends could knit.

“People don’t realise we don’t dress them up for fun- it is essential for their wellbeing. When the lambs come to us they are not doing well – often the farmer couldn’t be bothered with them.

“Some ewes give birth to multiple lambs, but the farmers are generally just interested in the first, leaving the following ones out to die, or for the foxes.”

When the lambs arrive at Hugletts, they will often be malnourished and dehydrated, so they need lots of care.

“With their little woolly coats on,” Wenda explains, “their tiny bodies can use their energy to get stronger, instead of using it all to keep warm.

“The lambs have to be fed every couple of hours, so they sleep inside with a couple of blankets to stay warm. We believe in doing the hard work when they are titchy. The moment they can hold their own, we put them in company of other sheep – we don’t want to turn them into dolls, but the whole process of integrating into the flock is very gentle.

“These little coats are very sweet, but there is a serious side to what we do. If we can alleviate a bit of the awfulness with something beautiful, we do it. Practical doesn’t have to be boring, and the animals realise they are warm, comfy and being cared for.

“Success to us is one individual who can get to live a good life, away from the horror of the slaughter house. We feel so lucky to have been able to do what we’ve done here – the animals and the wildlife are Hugletts Farm.

“We are just the caretakers.”

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TAKE

Getting children eating right – at home and at school – is one of life's most valuable lessons.

By Miranda Simmons

Nutrition and health are intrinsically connected – so why do so many kids (and adults) eat the wrong things? That's a huge discussion being had in schools, homes and government offices the world over.

Well, progress is being made, it seems, in getting our children to eat healthier meals at school, though parents still need to take control when it comes to better eating.

And, with the new academic year only just underway, it's the perfect time to get those good habits in place now, no matter how young (or teenage!) your children.

Still, the trend is positive for the most part. In the US, most schools are now implementing healthier practices to help meet federal school meal standards, according to recent data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This means offering whole grains, more fruits and vegetables, and reducing sodium content in school dinners.

What happens at school is important when it comes to nutrition as students consume almost half of their daily calories intake there during the school week.

"School meals are healthier now than ever before," says CDC director Tom Frieden. "We've made real progress, but there is much more to do to help American children make food choices that will keep them healthy throughout their lives."

Obesity battle

The US, which is battling an obesity epidemic, has set healthy eating standards that require serving more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and gradually reducing sodium over the next 10 years as part of a broad initiative to tackle the problem.

In terms of getting children to eat their five-a-day, though, there's still a long way to go. Most schools studied by CDC offered two or more vegetables (79%, up from 62% in 2000) and two or more fruits (78%, up from 68% in 2000) each day for lunch. Less than one-third (31%) of schools offered self-serve salad bars.

It's true that schools play a critical role in demonstrating and reinforcing healthy eating behaviors, making sure that nutritious and



Life & loves

of a yoga teacher

OM writer Lesley Dawn quizzes yoga teachers up and down the country to reveal their life and loves

Name: Jen Geering
Age: 31
Location: Bexhill and Eastbourne
Training: Sally Parkes, Hatha Flow Science
Specialism: Yoga for beginners

Describe yourself as a color

Sunny yellow. I'm quite a happy, bright, cheery person and have a good sense of humor; if I can make people smile then it makes my day. Yellow is the color of the sun, it's a warm, energizing color.

Morning or night person

I'm an early morning person, up by 6am. I love the mornings and will gladly talk to anyone from sunrise. There's so much potential in the new day, so much to look forward to. It's exciting; the expectation of not really knowing what could happen.

Favorite meal

I'm a pescatarian, so fish is my first choice, but very simply presented. I'm not an adventurous cook – keeping to the basics with fresh ingredients and ensuring I eat a nutritional diet. I am a seaside-town girl (originally from Hastings) and so love fish and chips.

Most memorable holiday

Disneyland, Paris - where I went for my honeymoon four and a half years ago. It was a trip planned in just six weeks and, because it was planned in such a short space of time, we decided to shed adult behavior briefly and just have loads of fun on the most amazing rollercoasters and wheels, and amusements. The themed hotel we stayed in had Mickey Mouse shaped soap.



Favorite book

All of The Earth's Children series by Jean M Auel. They are just inspirational books on how an individual can achieve despite adversity. In my teens I was searching for something to hold on to, something that would motivate me and give me direction and I discovered the first series by the same author (including The Clan of the Cave Bears and The Mammoth Hunters).

Best light-bulb moment

Definitely thinking I should become a yoga teacher. I was unhappy in my job and considered yoga my first love so I researched a course and booked myself on it within a day. I've met such lovely people along the way and teaching has made me a more confident person.

Happiest moment to date

Saying yes to getting married – and certainly experiencing true happiness about making a deep and meaningful commitment.

Wish for anything – what would it be

To have more time in the day so I could do more of everything in the home, at work and especially helping other people. Teaching yoga is hugely satisfying when you see people achieving something they didn't think they could do. I have a full time job also but yoga is my real love.

Naughty but nice

Chocolate puddings (and, indeed, anything chocolate!). I generally squeeze something chocolatey into my day just to get that balance in life. I don't think it's awful to self-indulge sometimes. ॐ